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20 Sep 1968

Marine's Guide To The REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM

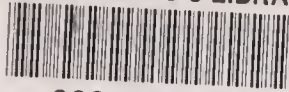


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FLEET MARINE FORCE PACIFIC

MAY 1968

ENCLOSURE (1)



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FOREWORD

The reason Marines are in Vietnam can be summed up in a single word --- "freedom". Freedom for others, whose freedom we respect, and freedom for ourselves, whose freedom we treasure. Until 1961, the indigenous Communist forces, the Viet Cong, supported and directed by the leaders of North Vietnam, had been waging a guerrilla war against the duly constituted government of the Republic of Vietnam. At this critical juncture in time, North Vietnam, apparently feeling that the attempted take over was not proceeding rapidly enough, increased the scope of their military and terrorist campaigns in South Vietnam. The South Vietnamese asked for increased United States assistance, and our Nation responded.

The commitment of Marines in force to the war in Vietnam did not occur as a single military stroke; rather it evolved progressively as the enemy aggression in Vietnam grew. At the time of the landings in March 1965, Marines had already participated to a substantial degree in support activities in the defense of Vietnam. However, when Marine combat units arrived in force, they found their areas heavily infested by Viet Cong. The South Vietnamese people, anxious for protection, had no one to whom they could turn.

We had to demonstrate to the people that Marines were always close at hand and that we were determined to stay as long as necessary to shield the population from the Communists. We had to show the people that we were friends, and could be trusted. Just as important, we had to show the people that Marines were more than a match for the enemy. All of these things have been accomplished by your fellow Marines who have served in the Republic of Vietnam.

This modest guidebook is designed to acclimate you to the area where you will be living and working during your tour. It also provides for a basic understanding of the Vietnamese people, which will help you to deal with them properly and to do your job better.

I cannot emphasize too strongly that one unthinking, careless act on your part can undo in seconds what Marines before you took weeks, and sometimes months, to accomplish.

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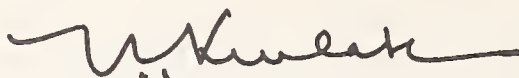
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While this guidebook does not contain all of the ingredients necessary to make you an expert on the country, careful reading will make your adjustment easier. I am sure that you will continue to learn more as each day passes during your Vietnam tour, and will continue to add to the significant contributions made by those Marines who have preceded you.

The best of luck in your endeavor,



V. H. KRULAK

Lieutenant General, U. S. Marine Corps
Commanding General, Fleet Marine Force, Pacific

CONTENTS

<u>TOPIC</u>	<u>PAGE</u>
INTRODUCTION	1
REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM ARMED FORCES	4
THE COMBINED ACTION PROGRAM	12
THE VIETNAMESE COAT OF ARMS	13
FLAGS	14
TERRAIN IN I CORPS	19
THE CLIMATE	32
THE PEOPLE	35
INDIVIDUAL CONDUCT	46
VIET CONG AND NVA TACTICS	49
ENEMY WEAPONS	56
THE HAMLET AND THE VIET CONG	76
URBAN AREAS	84
MARINE AREAS	87
SECURITY AND PRESS RELATIONS	95
LIFE OF THE MARINE IN VIETNAM	96
MEDICAL TIPS	101
MISCELLANEOUS INFORMATION	107
SUMMARY	112



INTRODUCTION

The Republic of Vietnam is located in Southeast Asia or what used to be French Indochina. It is bordered on the south and east by the South China Sea, on the west by Laos and Cambodia and on the north by Communist North Vietnam. South Vietnam is divided into four military corps zones as shown on the attached map, but, at present, Marine Corps interest is centered in I Corps. A detailed description of I Corps is contained in later paragraphs. To attain a clearer understanding of the struggle in Vietnam, the reader must examine the history of the area.

The Vietnamese are an ancient people who have managed to retain their national identity in spite of centuries of foreign influence. A Vietnamese state with its own culture is known to have been in existence three centuries B. C. in the Red River delta of what is now North Vietnam. The Chinese annexed the country in 111 B. C. and ruled Vietnam for more than a thousand years. A long series of rebellions ended with the expulsion of the Chinese in 939 A. D. The Vietnamese then maintained their freedom for five hundred years, although the Chinese again occupied the country for a brief period of time, in the fifteenth century. During these years of independence, Vietnam was torn by civil wars which twice split the country into two parts.

The French conquest of Vietnam began in 1858, and in 1883 the country became a part of the French colonial empire. French rule was challenged by many popular revolts, but the French remained in control of Vietnam until World War II began.

The Japanese occupied the country early in the war and allowed the French to remain as administrators. In 1941 Vietnamese Communists founded the League for the Independence of Vietnam, a front organization containing not only Communists but also Vietnamese nationalist groups. It was called the Vietminh and was led by Ho Chi Minh. The organization grew in strength during the war years, operating in rural areas in the north where neither the French nor the Japanese had control. When it became clear that the axis powers were losing the war, the Japanese disarmed and interned the French troops and set up a puppet government of Vietnam headed by the emperor Bao Dai. After Japan's surrender

to the allies in August, 1945, Bao Dai abdicated in favor of a new government set up in Hanoi by Ho Chi Minh. In September, British and Chinese troops arrived in Vietnam to accept the surrender of the Japanese: the British in the southern part of the country and the Chinese in the north. The British withdrew when their mission was completed, and French troops moved into Saigon and the surrounding countryside.

In the north, the French agreed to recognize Ho Chi Minh's government and in exchange, French troops were allowed to enter the area. After months of unsuccessful negotiations between the French government and the Vietminh concerning the future of the country, fighting broke out between French troops and the Vietminh in December 1946. The war lasted for eight years and ended in the French defeat at Dien Bien Phu in May, 1954.

At a conference held in Geneva, representatives of the French government and the Vietminh on 21 July 1954 signed an agreement to end the fighting. Under the terms of the agreement, Vietnam was to be temporarily partitioned along the Ben Hai River, leaving the north to the Vietminh and the south to the French and the State of Vietnam. Each force was to withdraw its troops to its own side of the demarcation line. A demilitarized zone was established on either side of the line to act as a buffer zone and all military forces were to be withdrawn from that area. Each Vietnamese was given the right to decide whether he wished to live north or south of the line, and country-wide general elections were scheduled to be held in July, 1956, to bring about the unification of Vietnam. The United States declared that it "would view any renewal of the aggression in violation of the agreement, with grave concern and as seriously threatening international peace and security."

In South Vietnam, a republic was organized in 1955 with Ngo Dinh Diem as president. French troops were withdrawn from the country, and some 900,000 Vietnamese who had left the north under the terms of the Geneva agreements were resettled, with aid from the United States, in new homes in the south. The Republic of Vietnam objected to holding the general elections called for under the agreements, since more than half the population in rural areas would be forced to go to the polls subject to Communist coercion. At that time it was felt that the Communists would not permit fair elections.

North Vietnam reacted by beginning a campaign of terror in South Vietnam, led by Communist agents who had remained behind in South Vietnam after the 1954 Geneva Agreement, or who had infiltrated from the north, armed with weapons obtained from the caches hidden in the south when Communists troops were withdrawn in 1954. These individuals became known as the Viet Cong and instituted the insurgency which has continued to this date. The Viet Cong propaganda, terrorism, and guerrilla activities increased throughout the late fifties, and by 1960, battalion-sized operations were being conducted. North Vietnamese infiltration of troops, arms and ammunition was stepped up, and by 1962 the Viet Cong numbered about 25,000. Between 1963 and 1965, internal political unrest in South Vietnam gave the Viet Cong invaluable opportunities which they fully exploited.

Today the war in Vietnam has reached new proportions with the participation of complete units of the North Vietnamese regular army. In addition to trained men and political and military direction, North Vietnam has supplied arms and ammunition in increasing quantities.

The United States is carrying out its commitment to support the Geneva agreements and is aiding the people of the Republic of Vietnam in preserving their independence. For this purpose, and this purpose alone, United States Marines were landed on the shores of Vietnam on 8 March 1965.

REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM ARMED FORCES

The Government Organization: Political power in the Government of Vietnam (GVN) is concentrated at the national level: major programs are originated by the bicameral legislature, which is similar to our Congress in that it has a Senate and a House of Representatives. The President is the real head of the government and is assisted in the development of policies, decisions, and programs by his cabinet. These policies are then shaped by the Prime Minister and passed to the lower echelons of the government -- province, district, village and hamlet--for execution.

Routine administrative instructions from the various ministers in Saigon normally go directly to the province chiefs. The 44 provinces in the country equate to our states. Below the provinces, the next subdivision of government is the district, which is similar to our county. Provinces and districts are sometimes referred to as "sectors" and "sub-sectors" respectively. Districts are divided into villages, with an average of 8 to 12 per district. Villages normally consist of 4 - 6 hamlets. Historically, the hamlet has been the most important organization to the Vietnamese peasant. The boundaries of a hamlet are not always clear and it may be compared to what we describe as a "neighborhood".

The Armed Forces: The military power of the Republic of Vietnam is made up of three main elements: Republic of Vietnam Armed Forces (RVNAF), the Regional Forces (RF), and the Popular Forces (PF), as well as elements of other militia or paramilitary organizations. Each of these elements has a specific role in the overall strategy for defeating the VC and North Vietnamese Army (NVA) units. The Armed Forces and all military operations are controlled through the corps commanders assigned to each of the four corps in South Vietnam.

Army of the Republic of Vietnam: ARVN, the Vietnamese regular army, is primarily an infantry force, consisting of ten infantry divisions plus separate infantry, airborne, ranger and armored units. ARVN units are often committed to securing areas where civilian police or pacification teams are operating, and defending key installations or supply and communication routes. The ARVN has also been assigned the additional responsibility of providing

security for Revolutionary Development Teams. This has now become one of their main responsibilities. ARVN operations are closely coordinated with the local GVN province officials to insure that they support the local efforts and do not endanger local government forces.



VIETNAMESE SOLDIERS DEBARKING FROM HELICOPTER.

The Vietnamese Air Force: The Vietnamese Air Force (VNAF) is composed of five composite wings. Each is organized slightly differently and may include any number of fighter-bomber, transport helicopter and liaison aircraft. Fighter-bomber squadrons can engage designated targets with combinations of ordnance similar to that carried by U. S. aircraft. The transport squadrons provide a capability for movement and air dropping of troops, equipment and supplies. The liaison squadrons are capable of performing forward air control, visual reconnaissance, and liaison operations.

Vietnamese Navy: The Vietnamese Navy (VNN) is primarily a defensive force, consisting of a small sea force for off shore counter-infiltration surveillance along the coast from the 17th parallel to the Cambodian border, a coastal force--the junk fleet - for patrolling of inshore coastal waterways, and a river force for inland waterway operations. The river force is organized into fourteen River Assault Groups (RAGs). Each RAG is capable of transporting by water a battalion of RVNAF and supporting them for 10 - 14 days.



BEACHED LSM OF THE VIETNAMESE NAVY.

Vietnamese Marine Corps: The Vietnamese Marine Corps consists of one brigade of six infantry battalions, one artillery battalion, and one amphibious support battalion. U. S. Marines attached to the Marine Advisory Group (a part of MACV) work with the Vietnamese Marines and accompany them on all operations. The brigade is stationed in the Saigon area and conducts operations in that area as well as special operations in other Corps Zones when required.



VIETNAMESE MARINES MOVING OUT ON PATROL.

Regional Forces: The Regional Forces (RF) are a nationally administered military force assigned to and under the operational control of the sector commander (province chief). The basic combat unit of the RF is the light infantry company, though in certain provinces there are also a number of RF mechanized platoons, intelligence platoons and squads, and river patrol companies.

Normally RF units are recruited locally, placed under the operational control of the sub-sector commander (district chief), and habitually employed in the same general area. The primary missions given to RF units are to secure key installations and communication routes, to protect the local government officials and key people loyal to the government, and to provide a sub-sector reserve for assisting village or hamlet defense forces under attack. When ARVN or Free World Military Assistance Forces (FWMAF) units are operating in an area where RF are located, the RF can often contribute to the success of the operation through their detailed knowledge of the local terrain and people.



VIETNAMESE REGIONAL FORCES STAND INSPECTION

MACV (Military Assistance Command Vietnam) advisory teams work with the Vietnamese Army, Navy, Air Force and Marine Corps. In addition to advising on both administrative and operational matters, these advisory personnel provide a ready contact point for liaison, and coordinating combined operations.

Popular Forces: The Popular Forces (PF) are a nationally administered military force organized and operated at the village level and consisting of light infantry platoons. PF platoons are commanded by a PF platoon commander who is directly responsible to the district chief through the local village chief to whom the PF platoon is assigned. PF members are full time volunteers recruited within their native villages and hamlets to protect their own families and property and from this fact stems their motivation.



POPULAR FORCES, PART OF A U. S. MARINE COMBINED ACTION PLATOON.

Because of their small size, light arms, and limited training, the combat capability of PF units restricts their employment to defensive and limited offensive roles. The basic concept of employment is for village platoons and hamlet squads to defend their own area with the inter-village platoons providing responsive reinforcement. Occasionally, PF units may participate in operations with other forces. In such operations, which are normally undertaken to reinforce, support, or relieve a village or hamlet under attack, the PF are employed to act as guides, lay ambushes, protect flanks, or provide a rear guard for the main body. Because they are intimate with the local countryside, PFs are excellent sources of information on the enemy and the terrain. In I CTZ, the PF participate with the Marines in the Combined Action Program.

Vietnamese Paramilitary Forces: The paramilitary forces of the Republic of Vietnam include Revolutionary Development Teams (RDT), Armed Propaganda Teams (APT), National Police Forces (NPF), Police Field Forces (PFF), and Civilian Irregular Defense

Groups (CIDG). Although each of these paramilitary organizations is different in composition and in its assigned responsibilities, their missions are all directed towards assisting both the Republic of Vietnam's civil and regular military forces in the prosecution of Revolutionary Development. The characteristics peculiar to each of these paramilitary organizations are as follows:

Revolutionary Development Teams: The backbone of the Revolutionary Development program in the Republic of Vietnam is the RD Team. The Team possesses a limited defensive capability and is specifically trained in assisting villages and hamlets to achieve the goals set by the national government's RD program. Within I CTZ, RD Teams are controlled and assigned by the province chief in accordance with the annual RD plan for the province. These 59-man RD Teams are assigned only to those villages/hamlets in which military forces are available to render protection, since RD Teams possess only a minimum defensive capability.



REVOLUTIONARY DEVELOPMENT TEAM MEMBERS HELP THE PEOPLE.

Upon entering a hamlet, the first order of business for the RD Team is to take the census and interview the people to determine their grievances and aspirations. The Team determines the status of the local government officials and conducts a survey of the situation to determine needs. The remainder of the program is built on this base. The Team continues to work with the local government, strengthening it and eventually sponsoring elections. The Team also organizes self-help projects and obtains the materiel and funds necessary for their completion. In any hamlet, the entire process can take up to one year or longer to complete, depending on the effectiveness of the Team and the reception accorded them.

Armed Propaganda Teams (APT): The Armed Propaganda Teams are specially trained in psychological operations and propaganda warfare techniques to gain the support of the population for the GVN. These teams also have the capability of assisting village and hamlet chiefs in conducting census, gathering intelligence information, and uncovering the Viet Cong infrastructure within villages and hamlets. Although these teams have a minimum defensive capability, they are never employed without additional forces being provided. APTs employ former Viet Cong, known as Hoi Chanh, who have rallied to the side of the government through the Chieu Hoi, or "Open Arms" program.

National Police Forces (NPF): The National Police Forces are directed at the national level, with subordinate headquarters located in each province. National Police initiate and maintain population and resources control, maintain law and order, prevent and control riots and, in conjunction with military forces and RD cadre, identify and eliminate the VC infrastructure. National Police also augment PF and RD in their assigned missions.

Police Field Forces (PFF): The PFF are trained forces used to augment the National Police and to free its technically skilled members for other more important duties consistent with their training. PFFs also operate as light infantry and are organized in battalions, companies, and platoons.

Civilian Irregular Defense Groups (CIDG): The Civilian Irregular Defense Group is a local Vietnamese or ethnic paramilitary force that provides border security and surveillance primarily in the highland areas of South Vietnam. The CIDG is a nationally

administered force advised by U. S. Army Special Forces personnel.



THE COMBINED ACTION PROGRAM

The Combined Action Program involves special units made up of both U. S. Marines and Popular Force personnel. The Combined Action concept was conceived to provide a sufficient force to occupy and control areas uncovered by the forward movement of the U. S. Marine and ARVN units and to assist in Revolutionary Development efforts within these areas. The primary mission of Combined Action organizations is local defense. In this connection, the Popular Force members of the Combined Action unit contribute to the combined effort by their knowledge of the local area, people, customs, government and Viet Cong activities. Marines contribute to the combined effort by training the PF and increasing the PF's combat effectiveness; the Marines are equipped with the necessary communications to call in artillery, air strikes, or reinforcements if required. Marine volunteers are assigned to these units on a semi-permanent basis to permit sustained operations in a certain area and continued association with a particular group of people.

The program is coordinated at all levels by Marine commanders and local Vietnamese officials.

Besides U. S. Marines, forces from all branches of the United States armed services are present in I Corps and contribute significantly to the overall effort. Their functions and missions are familiar to all Americans and will not be elaborated on here. Additionally, Marines from the Republic of Korea operate with III MAF forces as part of the Korean assistance to the Republic of Vietnam.

THE VIETNAMESE COAT OF ARMS

The coat of arms of the Republic of Vietnam has as its central theme, the flexible bamboo, symbolizing consistency, faithfulness, and vitality. The bamboo is flanked by a writing brush, symbol of culture, and a sword, representing strength and determination.



VIETNAMESE COAT OF ARMS

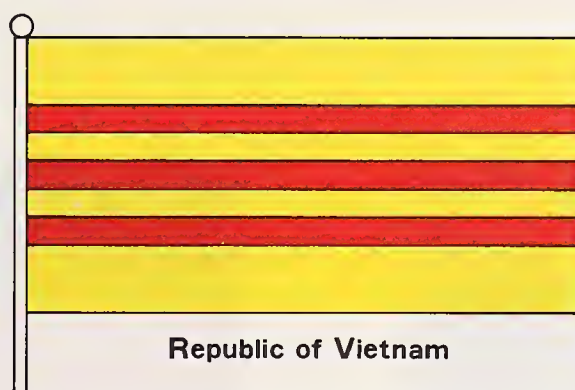


Bamboo is typical of the Vietnamese countryside. Thick hedges of the woody grass, growing profusely, form a protective wall around almost every village in the central coastal plains. Thus, for many Vietnamese, bamboo is associated closely with their rural life, a happy image of home and traditions rooted in a time-honored past.

The inner strength of the bamboo, coupled with its flexibility and modest appearance, are considered as representing the virtues of a gentleman. An ancient proverb says, "the taller the bamboo grows, the lower it bends", meaning that a great man is humble, modest and tolerant. A fierce storm may uproot proud and stately and seemingly indestructible trees, but after the storm subsides, the flexible bamboo emerges as straight and as green as before. This reflects the Vietnamese approach to life.

FLAGS

Vietnam:



The flag of the Republic of Vietnam consists of three red stripes on a field of gold. Gold is the ancient imperial symbol and red represents the blood streams of the people in North, Central and South Vietnam.



While many nations furnish Vietnam with some form of assistance, five countries beside the United States have committed armed forces to the fight against North Vietnamese aggression. These nations, Australia, New Zealand, the Philippines, the Republic of Korea, and Thailand, together with the United States, are collectively referred to as Free World Forces (FWF).

The Free World Flags in Vietnam:



United States



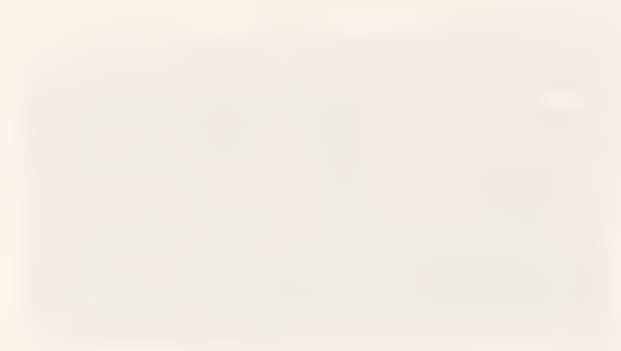
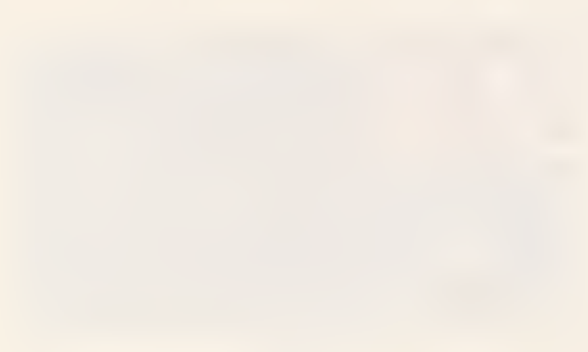
Australia



Philippines



New Zealand





South Korea



Thailand

Buddhist Flag: Often times you will find a unique flag flying over Buddhist temples.



Buddhist Flag

In Buddhism the individual finds a larger meaning to life by establishing identity with eternity - past, present, future - through cycles of reincarnation. In the hope of eventual nirvana, that is, oneness with the universe, he finds consolation in times of bereavement and special joy in times of weddings and births.

The Buddhist Flag in Vietnam is composed of six vertical stripes of equal width. To the Buddhist, each color signifies a different virtue, but there is no consensus about which color denotes which virtue.



Cao Dai Flag:



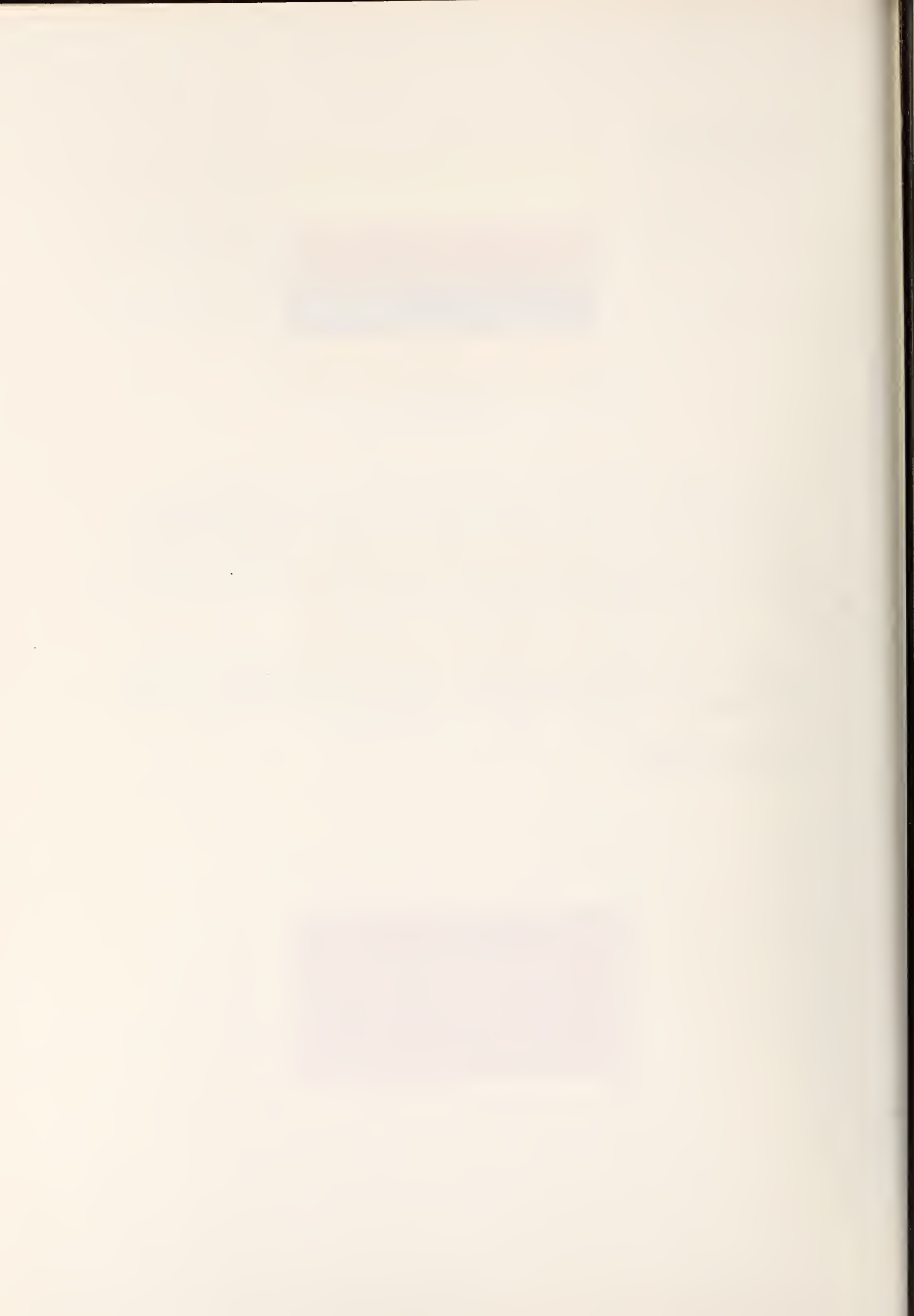
Cao Dai Flag

Cao Dai is a blend of the three great oriental philosophies - Confucianism, Taoism, and Buddhism - set in an organizational structure based on that of the Roman Catholic Church. Its ritual shows the strong influence of Vietnamese Folk Religion. Cao Daism predominates in Tay Ninh Province northwest of Saigon and few of its adherents will be found in I Corps.

The Cao Dai Flag is composed of three horizontal stripes of equal width. The brilliant colors signify Confucianism, Taoism, and Buddhism, and symbolize authority, peace, and virtue.

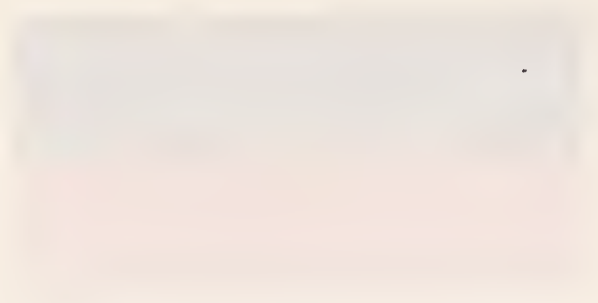
Viet Cong Flags:



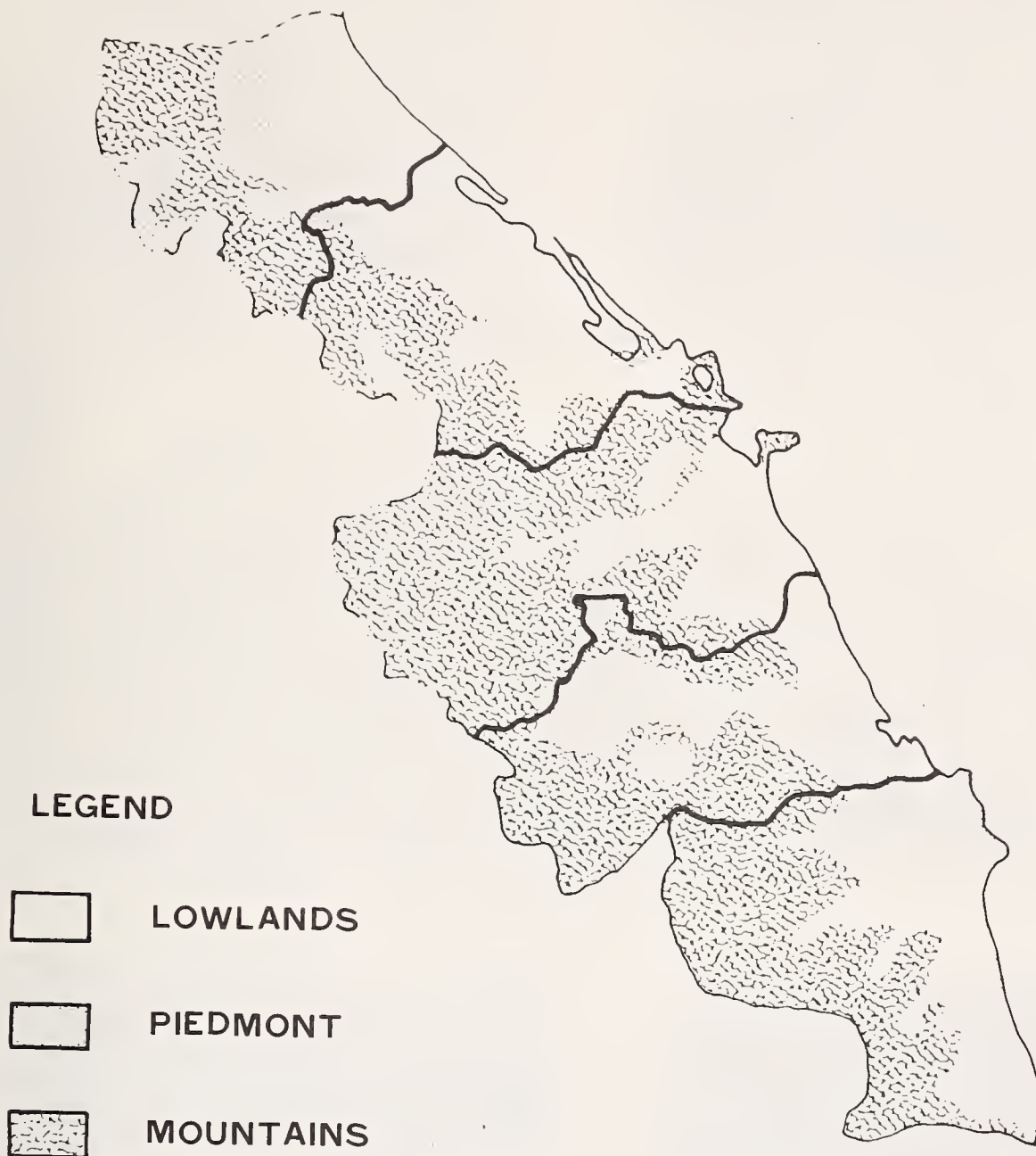




The Viet Cong have used all of the flags depicted at one time or another. In each case the five pointed star is gold; the background color may be solid red, red and blue, or red, white and blue. The North Vietnamese flag is depicted with a solid red background with the gold star centered.



TERRAIN CONFIGURATION



TERRAIN IN I CORPS (CENTRAL VIETNAM)

The I Corps area as shown above is approximately 200 miles long and varies in width from 30 to 80 miles. The I Corps area can be divided into four geographic regions as follows: the coast, lowlands, piedmont, and the jungle highlands.

Coast:

The I Corps area, as is all of South Vietnam, is bounded on the east by the South China Sea. No general statement can be made to typify this coastal region as it varies considerably from place to place. In some locations, high cliffs rise up from the edge of the ocean while at others, low, sandy beaches extend inland to the area known as the lowland. For example, in the northern coastal region of I Corps, lagoons and tidal channels run parallel to the coast and are separated from the sea by a narrow sandy belt, while around the Danang area, mountain spurs from the highlands extend out to the sea giving a considerable variation in terrain over a short distance of coastline.

In the flat areas along the coast, the beaches extend inland usually about 100 - 150 meters but can extend much farther as is the case at Chu Lai where the soft sands reach inland some 4000 meters. Beyond these dune areas, one moves into the hinterland which is actually the edge of the lowland areas. Generally the drainage is poor. Construction of dikes for rice raising has compounded the drainage problem. The various rice paddies in any given part of the coastal lowland region are flooded at different times; consequently there is no one period during which all of the land is dry and movement over land made easy. This surface water is either salty or contaminated by the fertilizer used in the fields.



FISH TRAPS LIKE THESE ARE FOUND THROUGHOUT THE RIVERS AND INLETS IN THE COASTAL AREA



BOATS ARE THE MAIN MEANS OF TRANSPORTATION FOR THE PEOPLE OF THE COASTAL REGION



THE FISHING FLEETS MOSTLY
OPERATE FROM THE MANY
SANDY COASTAL BEACHES.



FRESH-WATER FISHING
YIELDS A BONUS CROP FROM
FROM RICE PADDIES.

Fishing is the main source of income for the people living on the coast, but most families still have their own rice paddy. Additionally, when paddies are flooded, small fish are cultivated in the paddies, then caught in basket traps. Numerous fishtraps, some quite elaborate, will be found throughout the bays, rivers, lagoons and canals of the coastal and lowland areas. These should not be harmed. The income of most of these coastal people is comparatively higher than the people of other regions. This fact, coupled with the existence of natural harbors through which supplies from North Vietnam can be smuggled, makes control of the coastal area the ultimate aim of the Communists.

The Lowlands:

The lowland region of I Corps is made up of a narrow coastal plain stretching the entire length of the Corps area and of several valleys extending into the central highland. The region is quite fertile. Although it encompasses only about one-sixth of the total area of I Corps, virtually all of the crops, are grown here. Rice is by far the principal crop encompassing 90% of the cultivated land. The remaining 10% is devoted mainly to the raising of tea, sugar, cane, coffee, fruit trees, manioc, bananas and pineapples. The lowland region also contains the bulk (approximately 75%) of the I Corps population which is estimated at over 3,000,000. Control of the lowlands would give the Communists the rice needed to sustain themselves, as well as the considerable manpower needed to continue the conflict.



TERRAIN IN THE COASTAL PLAIN



EXTENSIVE RICE FIELDS EXIST IN THE LOWLAND AREAS



MARINES MOVE INTO THE LOWLANDS

It has been said of the lowlands region that if there is a piece of land that is not cultivated, it has a house built on it. This is not entirely true; however, it is pretty close. Although there are some rain forests, most of the arable area has been turned into rice fields which are flooded throughout the northeast monsoon season (September through January). Rice fields are normally made up of a number of square paddies which, from the air look much like a checkerboard. They are constructed with dirt dikes separating each paddy so that they can be kept flooded. During the monsoon season, the paddies will usually have mud and water a foot or two feet deep making even foot movement quite difficult; however, troops must avoid being canalized by the dikes. Moving across rice fields can be a particularly critical operation, especially for a small unit, such as a squad or platoon, on patrol. When crossing, observe the basic principle of staying spread out with a covering force in support. This will reduce the chances of an entire unit being pinned down in the open.

Besides the rice fields, sugar cane brakes are found in this area, although not in abounding numbers. When the cane is fully

grown, it offers excellent concealment. From a few feet inside a cane brake, one enjoys excellent observation to the outside but cannot be observed. This is made to order for enemy snipers and this fact should be kept in mind by Marines when operating in these areas.



CROSSING A RICE PADDY IRRIGATION DITCH.

Highway No. 1 traverses the length of I Corps through the low-lands area. Highway No. 1 is the major artery of Vietnam linking the North to the South and is capable of supporting military vehicles the year round. However, it has been subjected to Viet Cong interdiction in the past and may be temporarily closed at any given location at any time.

The lowlands region is the strategic key to the control of I Corps. It is not large in comparison to the highlands region, but it is agriculturally productive and contains the majority of the I Corps population. The individual rifleman can look to spending much time in this region.

The Piedmont:

Piedmont is a term used to indicate the hilly terrain separating the jungle highlands from the lowlands. It is the narrow belt of foothills that fronts the highlands of the west. Stream activity in the Piedmont is similar to that in the jungle. Locating drinking water (all water must be purified) is no problem. The road system is limited; however, some dirt and rock surfaced roads do exist and are accessible to vehicles. The Piedmont is sparsely populated with the majority of the people living in the valleys between the hills.

Most of the land in the hills is covered with dense growth of trees that reach to heights of 150 to 200 feet and form a dense canopy. Ordinarily, there is little undergrowth. Secondary growth which occupies abandoned fields and cutover land consists of very closely spaced small trees together with vines and dense brush. Movement through the secondary growth is difficult and slow, but by no means should it be avoided, because movement through these areas cannot be readily observed and reduces the possibility of being ambushed.

The Piedmont may also be regarded as the transition zone from coastal lowlands to the rugged mountains. Consequently, this area will be unique in that it will be entirely different from the flat terrain of the lowlands and the distinctive characteristics of the jungle highlands. Although this type of terrain covers the least area in South Vietnam, it can be readily seen that it presents definite tactical advantages and disadvantages to the combatant. These must be carefully considered when operating in or moving through the Piedmont.



TYPICAL TERRAIN IN THE PIEDMONT REGION

The Jungle Highlands:

This region, occupying about three-quarters of I Corps, consists of forested hills and mountains with deep, steep-sided valleys, rolling to hilly surfaces with grass and open forests, and numerous and sometimes marshy basins. Streams are plentiful and flow in all directions but eventually lead to a few large, shallow rivers which either flow into the China Sea to the east or the Mekong River in Laos to the west. All of the streams can be forded in the dry season but during the rainy season the water level rises considerably and the current becomes quite strong, making some fording attempts hazardous. A storm at the source of a normally fordable stream can turn it into a raging river in a matter of hours. In Kontum Province (II Corps Area) in 1963, an entire Vietnamese Ranger platoon was drowned while attempting to ford a stream that they had been able to cross but a few hours previously.



TYPICAL TERRAIN IN THE JUNGLE HIGHLANDS

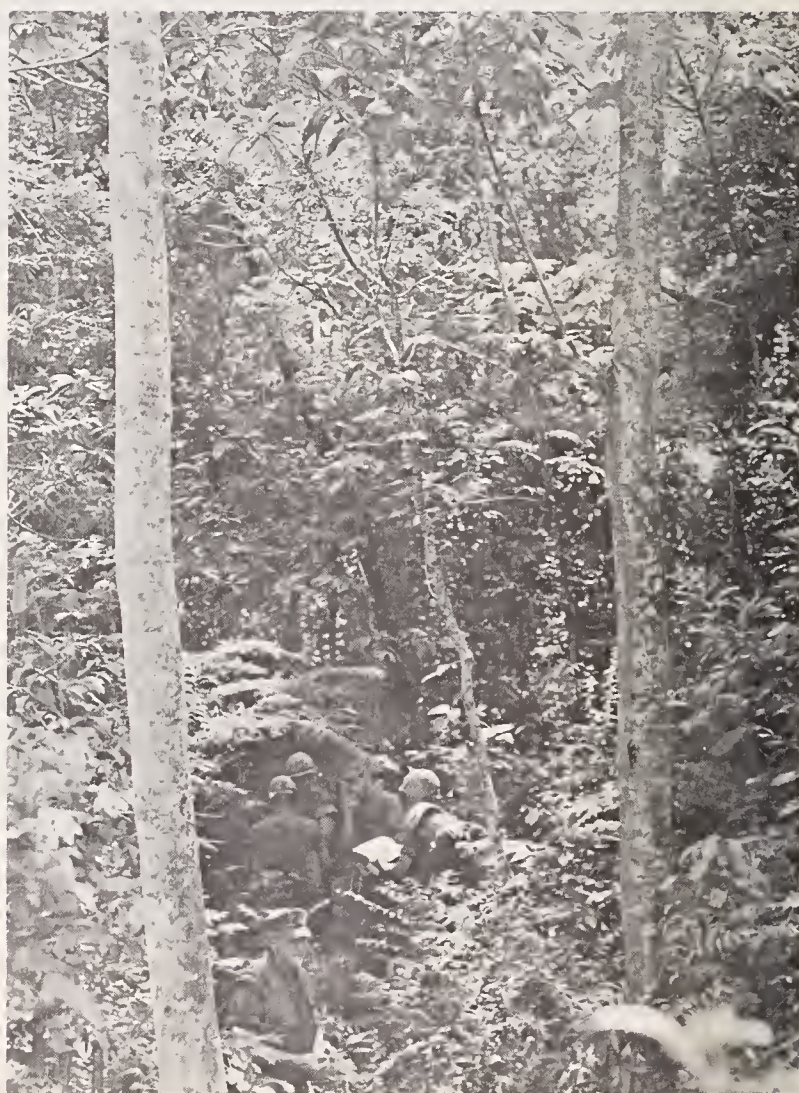
Despite the high mountains and thick vegetation, the jungle is passable on foot with the exception of a few steep slopes. A road system for wheeled vehicles is almost non-existent with the exception of a few cart trails; however, there are many foot paths which have been made by the native highlanders over the years in their normal daily traffic.

There is usually a double canopy and often a triple canopy in this area. The triple canopy means that, in addition to the undergrowth and the 150 - 200 foot trees, there will be an intermediate growth between the two. These areas are so thoroughly covered with vegetation that detection of ground movement from the air is virtually impossible.



Marines crossing a swiftly-flowing mountain stream.

The Marines at the bottom of this photo are almost completely concealed by the dense vegetation that is typical of the jungle highlands.



The population in this region is sparse, composed mainly of highlander tribesmen (Montagnards) living a simple life of hunting and slash and burn farming. Slash and burn or swidden farming involves the burning of the forest to clear areas for cultivation. When the soil becomes infertile because of repeated plantings, Montagnards move on to new areas and repeat the process.



MONTAGNARD COMBAT VILLAGE IN THE HIGHLANDS
FORMERLY UNDER VIET CONG CONTROL. NOTE THE
TRENCH SYSTEM.

The principal Montagnard Tribes in I Corps are shown on the accompanying map.

TRIBAL AREAS IN I CORPS



PRINCIPAL MONTAGNARD TRIBES IN I CORPS

If you happen to operate in the highlands you may encounter some of the mountain people dressed in primitive costumes such as those depicted in the two sketches. In other cases, you will find groups which have had more contact with the outside world dressed in more conventional clothing.



In summary, due to the vastness of the highland area and the problems encountered in movement and observation, neither the government nor the Communists maintain full military or political control of this region. The Montagnards themselves can be best described as politically non-committed. U. S. Special Forces personnel have worked with some Montagnard tribes for a few years and have achieved some success in developing their loyalty to the RVN government. However, viewing the highlands as a region, it is still uncommitted. Although the Communists lay claim to certain portions of the region, they by no means possess the hearts and minds of the people, thus their control is contingent on their physical presence.

THE CLIMATE

The weather in Southeast Asia has a strong influence on military operations there. Of the two monsoons, the southwest has the greater effect on overall activity since it brings heavy rains to most of the country between May and September. One exception is the strip of land east of the coastal mountain range in Central Vietnam which remains dry. This particular strip of land includes I Corps.

The northeast monsoon rains, which affect I Corps, begin in September and last through January. The average rainfall per month is extremely heavy from September through November and then tapers off during the months of December and January. For example, Danang receives an average of 23 inches of rain each October and 15 inches each November. This period of heavy rainfall obviously affects all types of military operations, but the effect varies with the amount of mechanization of any given unit and its particular operating area. Motor transport and tracked vehicles will at times be limited to surfaced highways. The heavy rains impose a handicap on movement of foot troops as well as mechanized forces, however, the foot soldier can continue to operate.



THE MONSOONS BRING HEAVY MUD

Much has been said about the monsoon offensives of the enemy. The monsoon season is supposed to bring stepped up activity by the Communists against U. S. and ARVN forces because of the reduced effectiveness of air and mechanized forces.

It is true that visibilities are reduced thus restricting close air support operations. At the same time, the trafficability of roads is reduced. Nevertheless, the enemy also is hindered by the monsoon rains and thus expected monsoon offensives have never materialized. The enemy has also learned to his chagrin that Americans are not fair weather fighters and have devised means of overcoming the effects of the monsoons.

The monsoon, in that it imposes the greatest restrictions, receives the majority of the attention devoted to climate and weather in Southeast Asia. However, the remainder of the year also brings another difficulty - intense heat. During the dry season, temperatures reach up to 100°F, and temperatures up to 130°F have been recorded in the sandy coastal region. For a foot soldier to move, carry equipment, and fight in an atmosphere of such intense heat, requires that he be in outstanding physical condition. In such a situation no substitute exists.



TRUCK BOGGED DOWN

THE PEOPLE

The Vietnamese appear at first to be quite different from us. Understanding the behavior of people who have been brought up in an unfamiliar culture isn't easy, and we must remember not to judge them by our own way of life. Learning Vietnamese social and religious customs is the first step in understanding and will help you avoid the mistakes others have inadvertently made. First and most important don't look down on the Vietnamese even though they are obviously poorer than the average American. People know when they are regarded with contempt. You know when someone dislikes you - so do the Vietnamese.

Show special deference to old people. The Vietnamese have great respect for the elderly. Age is comparable to rank as far as they are concerned. They are highly sensitive to matters of rank and status. When you go into a hamlet, look for the oldest man first. He deserves the most respect, even though he may not be the hamlet chief. He will be able to locate the local authorities for you.





BE RESPECTFUL TO OLDER PEOPLE

In fixed situations where you know you will be returning to a village several times, and there is no need to conclude your business quickly, don't rush your dealings with the people. No matter what your objective is, if you have the time, during your first visit to a hamlet or to an official don't mention what you want. The visit should be only a social occasion and no business should be discussed. In your second visit you might partially discuss your business or refer to it indirectly. In the long run, you will save time by making many visits and being patient. The blunt approach natural to Americans must be curbed for best results. Ask a direct question and you are likely to get either an evasive answer or the response it is assumed you want to hear, whether it is correct or not. This is often the case when you request agreement and the other man is too polite to disagree directly. It is considered rude to make a request of an individual. Hint that you would like something done and let the Vietnamese volunteer to do it.

Don't pat a Vietnamese acquaintance on the back or on the head. In fact, "hands-off" is the rule, since such personal contact may be considered an affront to dignity. If you are a stranger in a hamlet, show friendliness to children through smiles and gestures but don't touch them. Vietnamese parents, like American parents, appreciate attention paid to their children by family and friends but dislike over-attention and the direct presentation of gifts by a stranger. Gifts to children, even a candy bar, should be channeled through parents and village elders.



Be especially careful in your conduct toward women. In Vietnam people show friendship publicly only with words and smiles. Shaking hands with women or patting them on the shoulder, actions which we take for granted, can cause resentment among the Vietnamese.

Learn to control your anger. Public displays of emotion are considered childish and immature by Vietnamese. So control your anger, affection, and other emotional impulses, and try to speak quietly at all times.

An invitation to eat in a Vietnamese home is not to be taken lightly; your host has spent time and money getting ready for your visit. Let the older people begin the meal before you do. Eat every bit of food put on your plate as a compliment to the hostess' cooking, but do not clean the platter from which everyone is taking food, since this would make your hostess feel she had not prepared enough food to satisfy you.

The American use of first names among people they have only recently met can cause resentment among Vietnamese, who are more reserved in their personal relations. Stick to Mr. and Mrs., and let the Vietnamese get on the first-name basis when they are ready. This same reserve applies to introductions. It is much better to arrange an introduction through a mutual acquaintance than to introduce yourself to a Vietnamese.

In conversation with a new Vietnamese acquaintance, stick to small talk. Do not discuss politics, and do not use the words "native", "Asiatic" or "Indochina".

Even when talking to a Vietnamese whom you know fairly well, it is wise to avoid giving outright advice. Do not push your ideas; act on your ideas when possible, and let the Vietnamese observe the benefits to be derived by following your example.



A QUIET HAMLET

If you have the opportunity to visit a Vietnamese family at home, remember to keep your feet on the floor. Propping your feet up on a chair or table is considered rude, and pointing your foot at someone (for example, sitting with an ankle on the opposite knee) is considered extremely insulting.

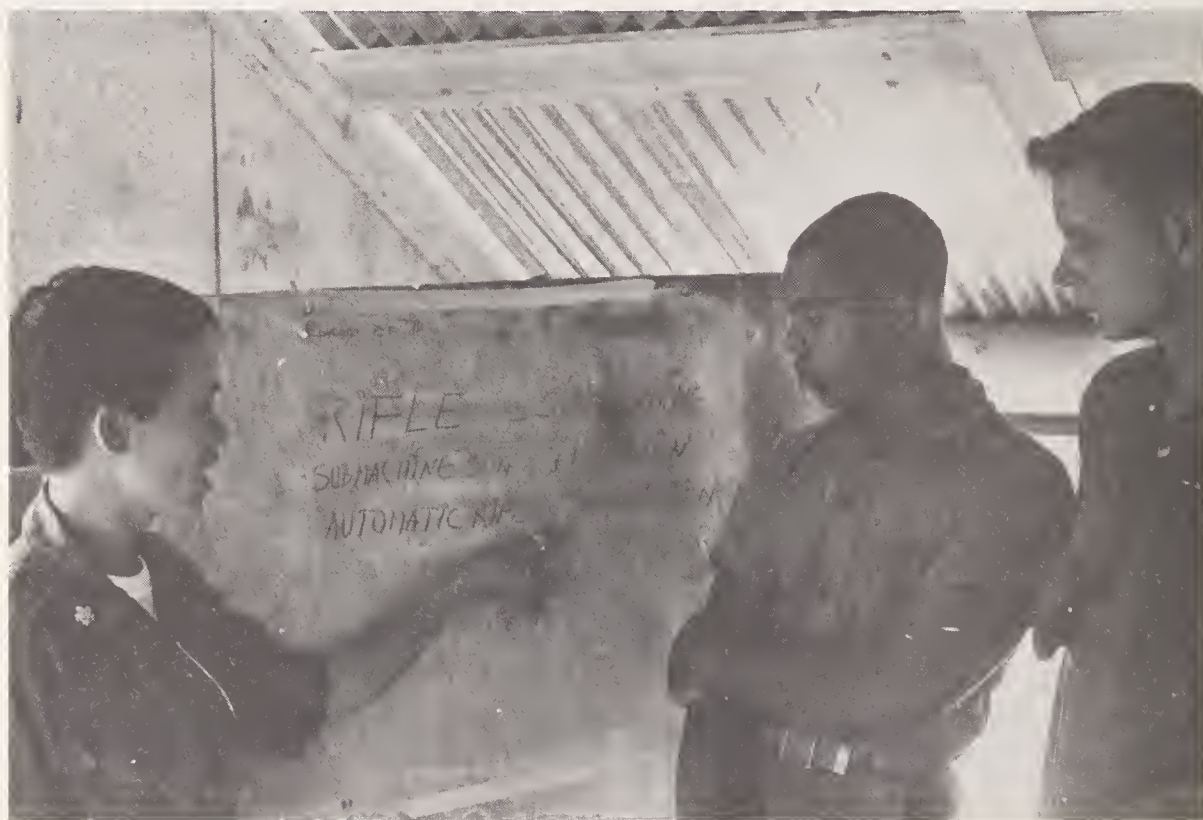
Even though you may admire an object in the house, it is bad manners to ask what it cost or where it was bought.

After you visit a Vietnamese at home, you can return his hospitality by inviting him to a restaurant--but make it an expensive restaurant, even though the food may be better at a cheaper place. The knowledge that he is being entertained expensively will please a Vietnamese more than a good meal would. Incidentally, the Vietnamese do not believe in "Dutch Treat." The older man is expected to pick up the tab after joining someone by chance in a restaurant.

If you send a present to a family which has entertained you, send something for the children rather than for the wife. Since odd numbers are considered unlucky, send two inexpensive presents to a child, rather than a single expensive one. This is especially true of wedding presents; one present is thought to be a sign that the marriage will not last. Observing customs like these, even when they seem strange to you, will go a long way in creating good will.

All of the foregoing points should be remembered, but of greatest importance is the use of ordinary common courtesy which you would extend to your parents or friends.

Also of importance is the willingness to learn at least the basics of the Vietnamese language. It is a hard one, but learning enough to conduct simple conversations pays off in smoother work relationships.



MARINES LEARN BASIC VIETNAMESE

Among the Vietnamese people, chronological time has little value. What may appear to Americans as laziness is actually the Vietnamese way of life. While we place a high premium on activity and progress, time tables, appointments, and schedules hold little interest for the average Vietnamese. What matters most to him is to strive for perfection, regardless of the amount of time required to do the job.

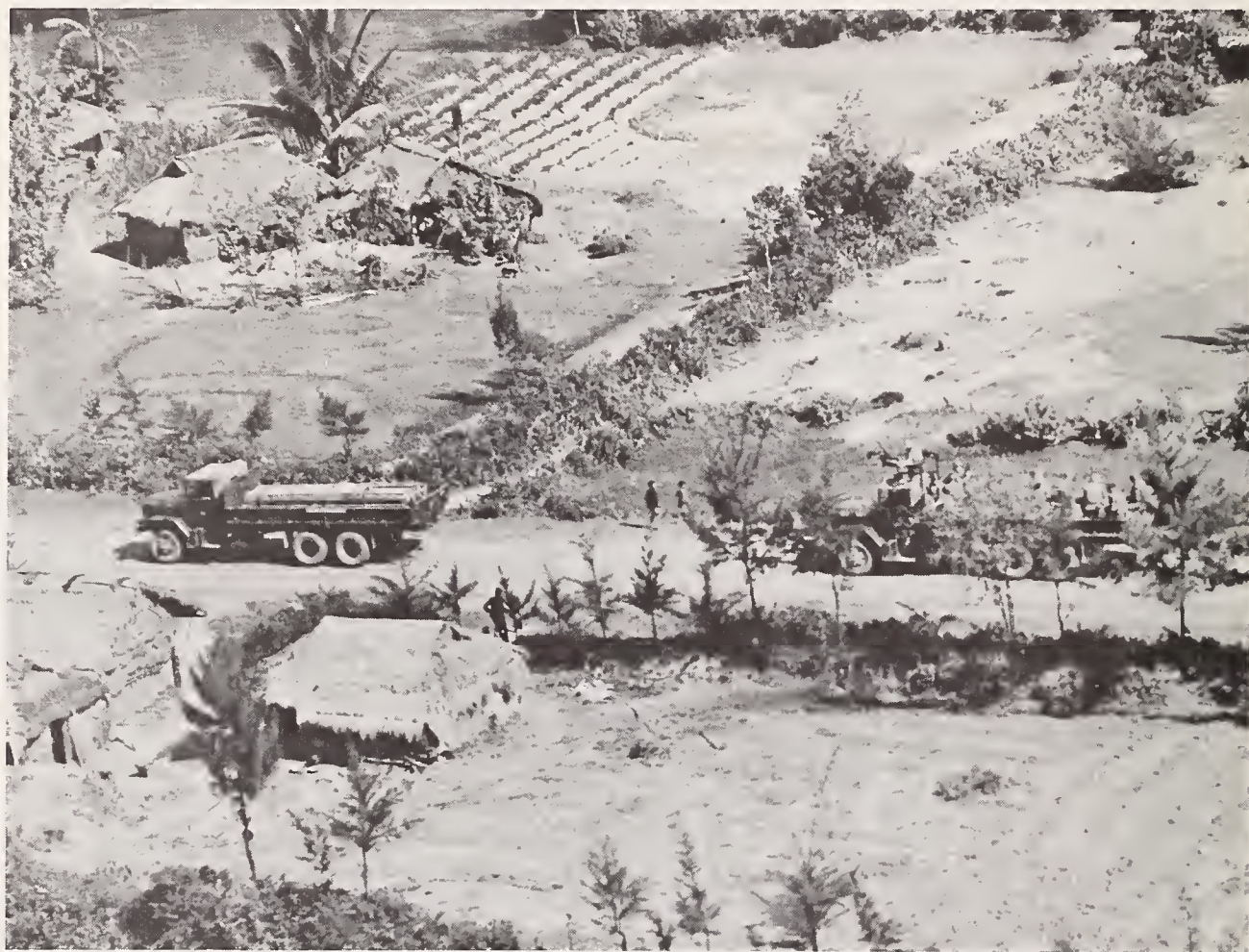
Unlike Americans, who have become known as people who change the physical world to suit their needs and desires, Easterners believe that the world around them is their fate and that it is necessary to strive for harmony with their surroundings. Many try to reduce their needs to a minimum necessary to sustain life and are amazed by the "needs" of Americans. Also, considering the fact that the average income of one Vietnamese peasant is slightly over \$120 a year, it is hardly surprising that American needs are luxuries in their eyes.



DESPITE THE SIGNS OF WAR, LIFE GOES ON FOR THE VIETNAMESE FARMER.

A particular point for all to remember is that most Vietnamese are deeply motivated by their religion. A great significance is attached to religious places and things. Temples, shrines, and religious artifacts should be accorded respect. The Vietnamese National Flag should also be treated with such respect. A careless act on the part of a Marine can create considerable ill will that is most difficult to overcome.

In regard to the oriental respect for the dead, a reverence is shown for the burial sites. The Marine must pay particular attention to insure he does not violate this ground that the Vietnamese hold sacred. These grave sites are located all over the countryside and are characterized by burial mounds.



NOTE THE GRAVES IN THE UPPER PART OF THE PHOTOGRAPH

Looking at the Vietnamese as a man, we see him in a hamlet in the countryside supporting his family with what he can grow in his rice fields. His house is built for practical uses rather than beauty. He uses locally available materials such as bamboo, straw,

mud and other products of the area. He extends the eaves well over the walls so that the heavy rains of the monsoons will not wash the walls away. He has very little formal education, but he is by no means stupid. His hamlet is run by the hamlet chief and in turn, depending upon the number of hamlets in the village, the hamlet chiefs are controlled by the village chief. When any problems arise, the man seeks advice from his hamlet chief. This life, although humble, is extremely orderly. The Vietnamese people, much the same as the Marine Corps, have a chain of command. Before you have anything to do with the people, you must first contact the village and hamlet chiefs. They speak for their people and know all that occurs in their areas and would be embarrassed and indignant if bypassed.

By our presence, daily contact, and association with the local population, we can foster friendship and restore the confidence and loyalty of the Vietnamese people toward their government, both local and national. This can be accomplished by two primary means; first is our rapport with the Vietnamese people. This includes developing an appreciation for their customs, traditions and history; treating the people as hosts, which they are, and respecting their religious beliefs, shrines, graves and other places of endearment. Secondly, we can assist the local government in gaining the support of the population. By working with and through local officials and providing material and technical assistance through them, we can build their prestige in the eyes of the people.

If these points are held in mind by the Marine, they will undoubtedly serve him well during his stay in Vietnam. They will help to make his job easier and most likely will lead to a more enjoyable tour. The main task in Vietnam is by no stretch of the imagination a pleasant one; but with a little conscientious effort on the part of each individual Marine, the non-combatant civilians of South Vietnam will not be alienated towards the U. S. Forces. In fact, cultivating a spirit of cooperation with the populace will, in many cases, result in tactical benefits to the Marine operating in the area.



MEDICAL CORPSMAN TALKS TO VILLAGE CHIEF THROUGH VIETNAMESE INTERPRETER

Outside the large cities, the routine of work goes on day after day without any pause on the seventh. Only when there is a national holiday or religious festival does the daily routine of "work, eat, sleep" come to a temporary halt. The chief Vietnamese festivals by the lunar calander are:

The New Year, more commonly referred to as "Tet",
NGUYEN DAN, 1st through 7th day of 1st month

The Trung Sisters, HAI BA TRUNG, 6th day of the 2nd
month

The Summer Solstice, DOAN NGO, 5th day of the 5th
month

Wandering Souls, TRUNG NGUYEN, 15th day of the 7th
month; also celebrated on the 15th day of the 1st and 10th months

Mid-Autumn, TRUNG THU, 15th day of the 8th month

TRAN HUNG DAO, 20th day of the 8th month

LE LOI, 22nd day of the 8th month

TET

Vietnamese Tet, the Lunar New Year, corresponds to Chinese New Year and occurs with the New Moon - late in January or early in February. It is essentially a three-day observance, the first being dedicated to ancestor worship; the second is for visiting parents, relatives, and friends; and the third is one of celebration "for the dead and the living." The actual period of celebration is established by government announcement.

As noted above, the Vietnamese celebrate their New Year, Tet, according to the lunar calendar rather than according to our western calendar. The main differences in the lunar calendar and the western calendar are that the lunar months alternately have 29 and 30 days, and that the lunar years are recorded in twelve year cycles rather than in numerical succession such as 1967, 1968, 1969 as in the western calendar. The twelve year cycle is illustrated below:

LUNAR CALENDAR



The year of the:

1967 Goat	1973 Buffalo
1968 Monkey	1974 Tiger
1969 Chicken	1975 Rabbit
1970 Dog	1976 Dragon
1971 Pig	1977 Snake
1972 Rat	1978 Horse

INDIVIDUAL CONDUCT

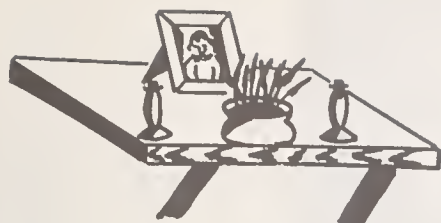
The Viet Cong's objective is to seize control of the hamlets and villages by a combination of military action, terrorism, political action, and subversion. Our objective is to resist this process, to reverse it. This means that the battle for Vietnam flows backward and forward across the homes and fields of the rice farmer and small town inhabitant. Whether, at any point of time, he lives in a Viet Cong or in a Government controlled hamlet depends to a large extent on forces beyond his control.

The use of unnecessary force in areas temporarily controlled by the Viet Cong will embitter the population and drive them into the arms of the Viet Cong.

Because of the lack of the well defined battle lines of conventional warfare, contact with civilians will be frequent. We are, of course, anxious to assist the Vietnamese in establishing a strong government fully supported by the people. Our conduct must therefore be such as to gain their cooperation, trust and confidence. It is not always easy to recognize friend from foe, but the distinction must be made at every encounter. We have every right, morally and legally, to destroy the enemy unless he surrenders. We have no right, however, to mistreat in any way a noncombatant civilian or prisoner of war. The same standards of conduct apply in Vietnam as apply to our own citizenry at home. Remember, if an innocent civilian is mistreated unnecessarily, he may turn and support the Viet Cong cause.

When you search a house, explain why it must be done. If it is necessary to sift through a rice bin, be careful that the rice is not lost or mixed with dirt. Religious articles like the ancestor shelf or a picture spirit house should never be touched by an American.

These are revered objects which will contain pictures or other mementoes of deceased relatives. While seemingly simple they are important to the average Vietnamese. The family altar or ancestor shelf is usually the center of the Vietnamese home. The spirit house is found outside the home or on top of a post and may many times be seen on the side of roads.



THE ANCESTOR SHELF IN
THE HOME



THE SPIRIT HOUSE

When you search a suspect, do it behind a screen of trees or a building. Searching a man in front of his neighbors makes him look like a criminal in their eyes. When a suspect must be taken away for interrogation, reassure his wife or parents that he will receive fair treatment. If the suspect is released after interrogation as an "innocent civilian", make every effort to provide transportation and food to lessen the inconvenience to him. Common sense will tell you that showing concern and respect for the people involved in a search will produce dividends in cooperation later. Time after time villagers have told Marines of planned Viet Cong attacks, ambushes, or mines. This is when your day-to-day efforts to win the confidence of the people really pay off.

Thus far during the conflict in Vietnam, there has been ample evidence pointing to the importance of proper conduct on the part of the individual Marine. The Vietnamese farmer or worker who is not committed to either side will be influenced more by a humane or respectful act than he will be by an unnecessary demonstration of military prowess. The Marine's reputation as a fighter is already well established. Now is the time to affirm an equally enviable reputation as a diplomat. However, at all times it must be remembered that accomplishment of your mission at a minimum amount of risk is your primary concern.



FRIEND OR FUTURE FOE - IT DEPENDS ON YOU

VIET CONG AND NVA TACTICS

The enemy is not employing tactics that are new or peculiar to South Vietnam. In 1959, General Vo Nguyen Giap wrote a book titled "People's War, People's Army", recounting the Vietminh war against the French forces, and how it developed from small attacks and ambushes by guerrilla bands to operations by regular mobile battalions, culminating in the army-sized attack at Dien Bien Phu. The high command in Hanoi, using the principles of Giap and other well known revolutionaries, is now masterminding the war in the south. Although the Communists no longer expect to defeat us militarily, they hope that through a combination of military actions and diplomatic moves, they will eventually take over the Republic of Vietnam. This tactic is called "Fight-Talk".

It is important to know how the tactics of Giap are practiced by the VC/NVA today. The Giap idea embodies two principal features. First, grind down the enemy by a series of harassing actions and small scale attacks, and then entrap him in a situation not of his own choosing. The grinding down process is practiced daily around our combat bases in the form of sniping, mine warfare, attempted ambushes, and small scale attacks. In practice the enemy has adopted other Giap inspired tactics for these small scale attacks. They are guided by the "Four Quicks and One Slow". That is; quick advance, quick assault, quick battlefield clearing, quick withdrawal, and slow preparation. Emphasis is placed on detailed planning (sand table models are often used) and rehearsals. Basically, enemy actions are deliberate rather than spontaneous in attacking targets of opportunity, although they sometimes improvise. Rarely do the Communists deliberately risk their resources, except when they believe the probability of success is high.

The enemy lacks the fire power of the Free World Forces in South Vietnam; therefore, it is usually not to their advantage to secure terrain. Rather, they concentrate on inflicting casualties and "wearing down the enemy forces". This is characterized by their technique, employed so many times in the years past, of attacking a small Vietnamese outpost which in turn is reinforced. The reinforcing column is the real target and the outpost is just the bait. When The relief force is ambushed, the Viet Cong withdraw. Also included in the wearing down process are multiple mortar and rocket attacks.



VC USING MODEL TO PLAN AND REHEARSE AN ATTACK

Baiting an ambush is another technique practiced and recently used against a Marine patrol. A platoon engaged in a day combat patrol was investigating intelligence reports of a VC weapons and ammunition cache. While moving to the suspected position, two VC riflemen were observed moving away from the patrol. The leading fire team took them under fire and the platoon pursued. When the platoon reached the position where the VC were first observed, they came under the sniper and machine gun fire of an enemy platoon. The patrol returned the fire, and reinforcements were dispatched as the VC began withdrawing toward a hamlet in their rear. Once in the hamlet the VC fire on the exposed Marines increased. Soon an orderly withdrawal by the VC was underway, with sniper and mortar covering fire to harass any Marine advances. A second Marine platoon was lifted by helicopter to reinforce the first one. They joined forces and advanced on the VC occupied hamlet. Snipers and mortars continued harassing the advance to such an extent that six members of one platoon were

killed by sniper fire alone. Additional reinforcements established blocking positions to prevent an escape, but although their arrival was rapidly executed, they were too late and no further contact with the VC was reported. Marine casualties (38) included 21 WIA, most of whom were wounded by mortar fire.



In the area north of Danang, the NVA is fighting a war different from the guerrilla war in the rest of the region. The North Vietnamese, although employing guerrilla tactics, normally operate in battalions or regimental sized units. NVA forces are generally better equipped and supplied than their brothers farther south. In addition, enemy units near the Demilitarized Zone do not rely solely on mortars and rockets as supporting arms, but have large caliber artillery which can be fired on Marines from positions north of the Demilitarized Zone. The enemy also has recently employed tanks in the DMZ area.

Bear in mind Giap's guidelines which in essence describe the enemy's tactics both in the DMZ and the remainder of Vietnam:

"Is the enemy strong? Avoid him."

"Is the enemy weak? Attack him."

Movement:

The enemy usually moves by foot wherever he goes, although he uses junks, bicycles, sampans, etc., when he can. He normally must carry on his back whatever he needs. He leads a hard life and receives little reward for his efforts. If he moves with his unit, it is usually at night as daylight brings the observation aircraft and not far behind them, the attack aircraft or artillery. The enemy must put up with harassment from the air by day and long arduous marches by night. To move safely during the day, he must go alone or in small groups of two or three. Assembly of these small groups is usually prearranged in conjunction with a particular task or operation. When the small groups gather in the assembly area, the plans are discussed, the briefing conducted, and the final decisions for execution are reached.



VIET CONG TRANSPORTATION

A particular method of operation is to move a unit from the assembly area to the attack position at dusk or shortly thereafter and reach the attack position prior to midnight.

Prior to the movement of the main force, an enemy situation cell composed of three men (one recon, one demolitions and one staff representative) will usually move to the objective area to reconnoiter the attack position and check on the security of the objective. One member of this cell then returns to the assembly area and becomes part of the recon squad that leads the main body. The attack will usually be launched so that sufficient time exists to attack, fight, withdraw and disperse prior to daylight when the observation aircraft will return.

Restricting the enemy ability to move about freely will deny him the capability of massing at will and cause him to fight on our terms, thus taking the initiative from him. The effort of denying the guerrilla the ability of free movement must be total and carried out energetically by all hands. This effort must include a universal suspicion of all native activity. The individual rifleman must be constantly alert, allowing no one to pass without being thoroughly scrutinized both male and female, regardless of age.

Bear in mind also that the individual Marine is the most important single source of information on the enemy in Vietnam today. Each Marine must be constantly on the alert for information about the enemy to pass on to intelligence personnel. All bits of information should be reported no matter how insignificant they may seem.

Terrorism:

A guerrilla force can exist only if it has the cooperation of the people. This cooperation can be either in the form of popular support where the guerrilla is viewed by the people with favor and is supplied and assisted voluntarily, or it can be brought about through fear. The Communists have principally resorted to the latter by employing terror tactics on a large scale. These tactics range from vague threats to kidnappings, torture, and murder and have been primarily aimed at government officials and their families and sympathizers in the rural areas. The results speak for themselves: in some rural areas governmental control is nil and the people refuse to cooperate for fear of reprisal from the Communists. This lack of cooperation on the part of the people compounds the difficulty of locating the enemy in some areas.

Terrorism is a totally negative approach toward gaining support and may backfire. The people do not relish living in an atmosphere of terror, but endure it only to remain alive. If the threat of reprisal is removed, the program of terrorism suddenly reverses direction and not only strips the enemy of his support, but unleashes a force against him that he cannot withstand.

To bring about this reverse effect and to deny the Viet Cong guerrilla his vital support, it is necessary to gain the full confidence of the people. This will be a slow process, but once started will pick up speed with a snow-balling effect. It will entail protecting the people who are within our areas and providing them with any assistance possible. Since they have lived for years beneath the yoke of Viet Cong terror, they will be wary and uncooperative at first, but will gradually warm up as they realize that we do not intend to harm or desert them. Once the fear of reprisal is removed, the people will willingly cooperate and provide us with the necessary information and assistance to bring about the ultimate defeat of the Viet Cong guerrilla.

Ambush Tactics:

The ambush has historically been the most common type of offensive operation conducted by guerrilla forces. This is necessarily so as the guerrilla has neither the men nor material to withstand extended periods of contact against a regular force, but rather, must rely upon the element of surprise and the ability to mass his firepower against a given point for a short duration. To counter these elements is to turn the ambush into a normal contact and to take the initiative from the enemy.

Ambushes often occur where and when they are least suspected: in the middle of an open field or a flooded area, in areas near RVN installations that were considered to be secure, and during movements to reinforce units under fire. In all of these instances, the situation exists where security is likely to be relaxed, thus rendering the friendly force susceptible to a surprise ambush.

The ambush formations employed by the enemy are identical to those found in any small unit tactics book. The linear ambush using the "L" and "U" formations and the area ambush are generally employed. Although these tactics are understood by both sides and are considered to be sound, success is dependent upon surprise,

which in turn is dependent upon camouflage and concealment. The Viet Cong and the NVA are well versed in camouflage techniques and continually stress its importance. They have gone to great lengths to achieve concealment from RVN patrols, both air and ground, even to the digging of extensive tunnel networks.



VIET CONG MACHINE GUNNER LYING IN AMBUSH

However, camouflage is susceptible to detection. The individual rifleman bears the responsibility for the detection of the enemy in his camouflaged positions. It is through his efforts while serving as point or flank security that the enemy will be uncovered and his ambush sprung prematurely. The rifleman must be suspicious of his surroundings at all times and be aggressive in his actions to prevent being surprised.

ENEMY WEAPONS

Pictured here are some types of enemy weapons that have been captured in South Vietnam. Enemy mines and booby traps are limited only by his inventiveness and ingenuity and you may expect to find the enemy using a wide variety of other weapons in addition to those shown here.



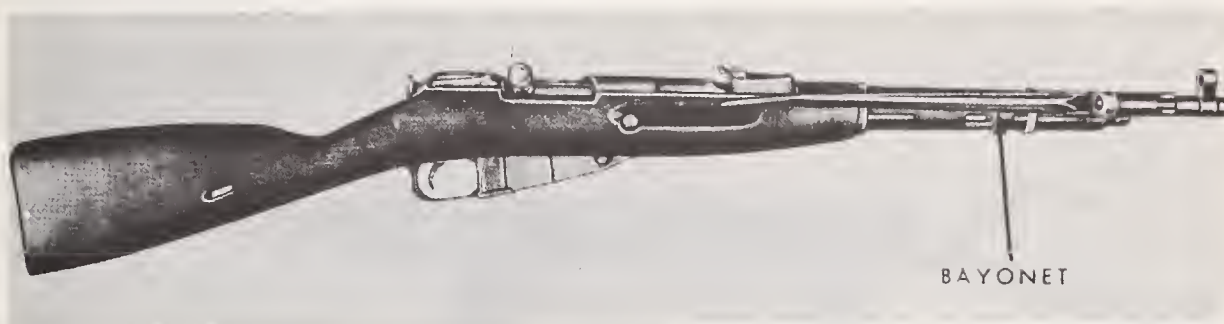
7.62 MM CARBINE (SOVIET SKS, CHICOM TYPE 56) SEMI-AUTOMATIC, M1943 AMMUNITION, 20 RDS/MIN, EFFECTIVE RANGE 440 YDS



7.62 MM ASSAULT RIFLE (SOVIET AK-47, CHICOM TYPE 56) SEMIAUTOMATIC, AUTOMATIC, 7.62X 39 AMMUNITION, 600 RDS/MIN (CYCLIC) 80 RDS/MIN (PRACTICAL) EFFECTIVE RANGE 440 YDS



7.62 MM RIFLE (SOVIET M1891/30,) BOLT ACTION, 7.62X54R AMMUNITION, 8-10 RDS/MIN, EFFECTIVE RANGE 800 YARDS

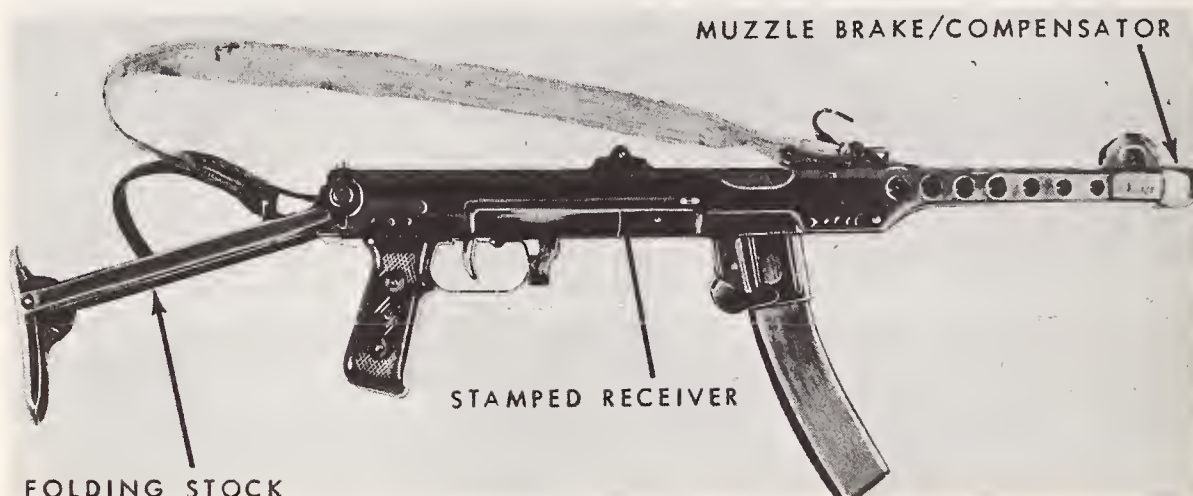


7.62 MM CARBINE (SOVIET M1944, CHICOM TYPE 53) BOLT ACTION, 7.62X54R AMMUNITION, 8-10 RDS/MIN, EFFECTIVE RANGE 440 YDS

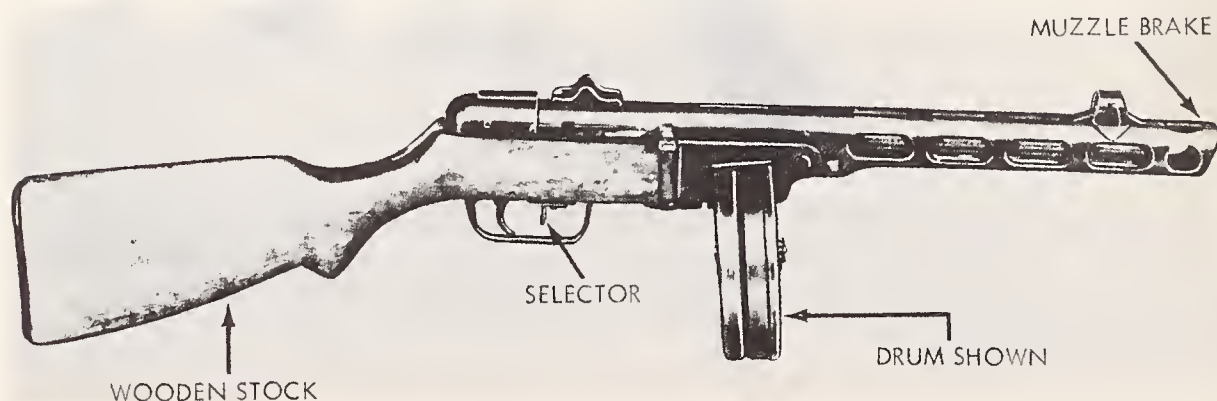


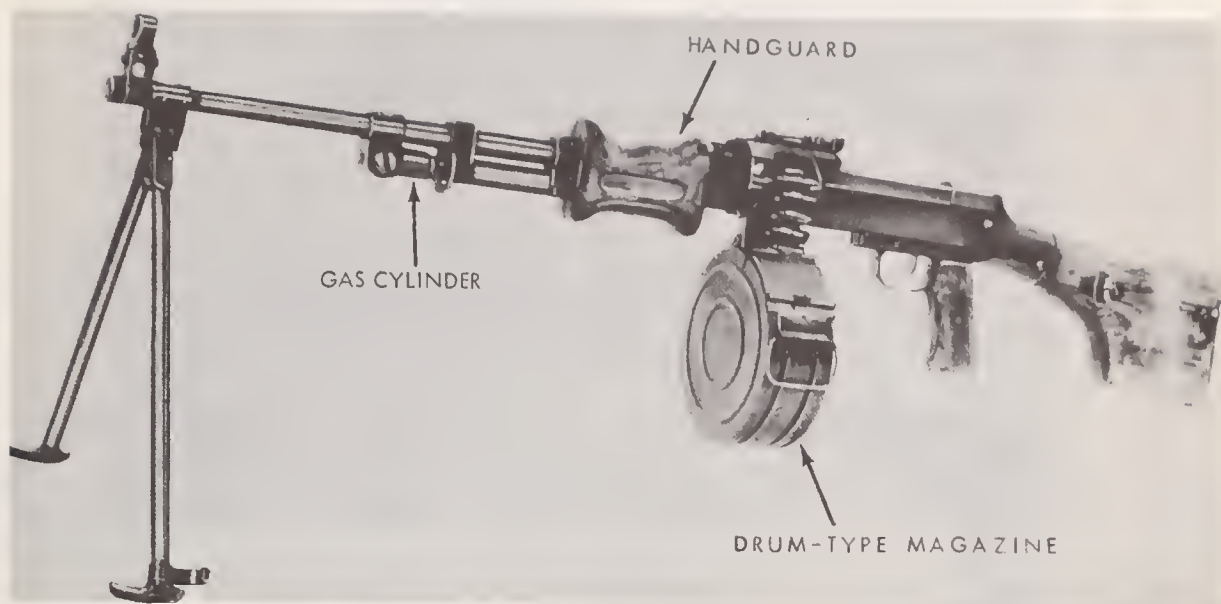
7.62 MM SUBMACHINE GUN (NORTH VIETNAMESE TYPE 50) SEMIAUTOMATIC, AUTOMATIC, 7.62X25 AMMUNITION, 900 RDS/MIN (CYCLIC) 100 RDS/MIN (PRACTICAL) EFFECTIVE RANGE 200 YDS

7.62 MM SUBMACHINEGUN (SOVIET PPS-1943, CHICOM TYPE 43) AUTOMATIC, SOVIET 7.62 M1930 "P" PISTOL BALL AMMUNITION, 100 RDS/MIN, EFFECTIVE RANGE 200 METERS

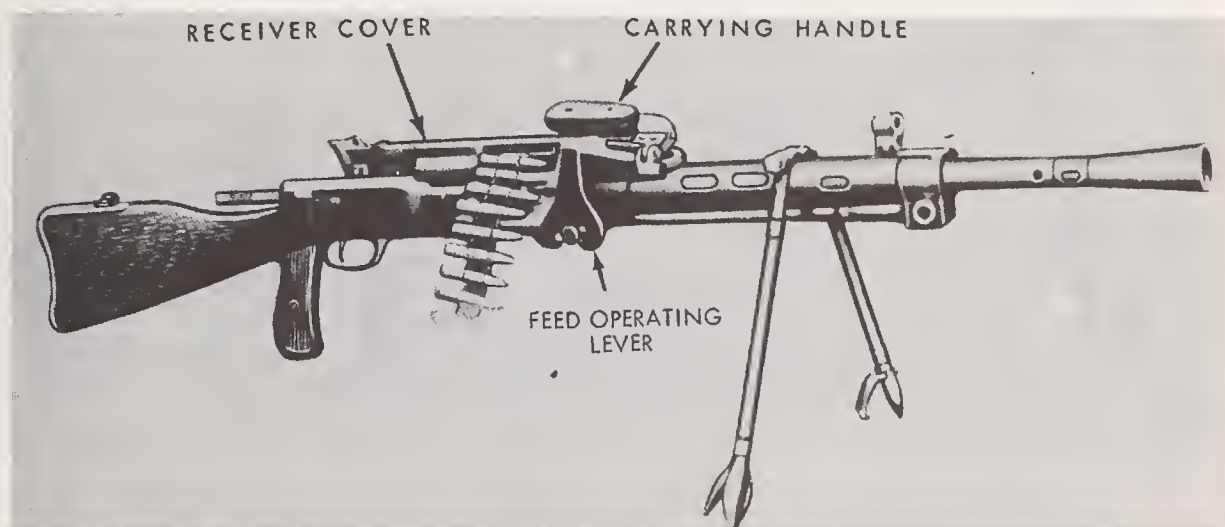


7.62 MM SUBMACHINEGUN (SOVIET PPSH-41, CHICOM TYPE 50) SEMIAUTOMATIC, AUTOMATIC, 7.62X25 AMMUNITION, 900 RDS/MIN (CYCLIC) 100 RDS/MIN (PRACTICAL) EFFECTIVE RANGE 220 YDS

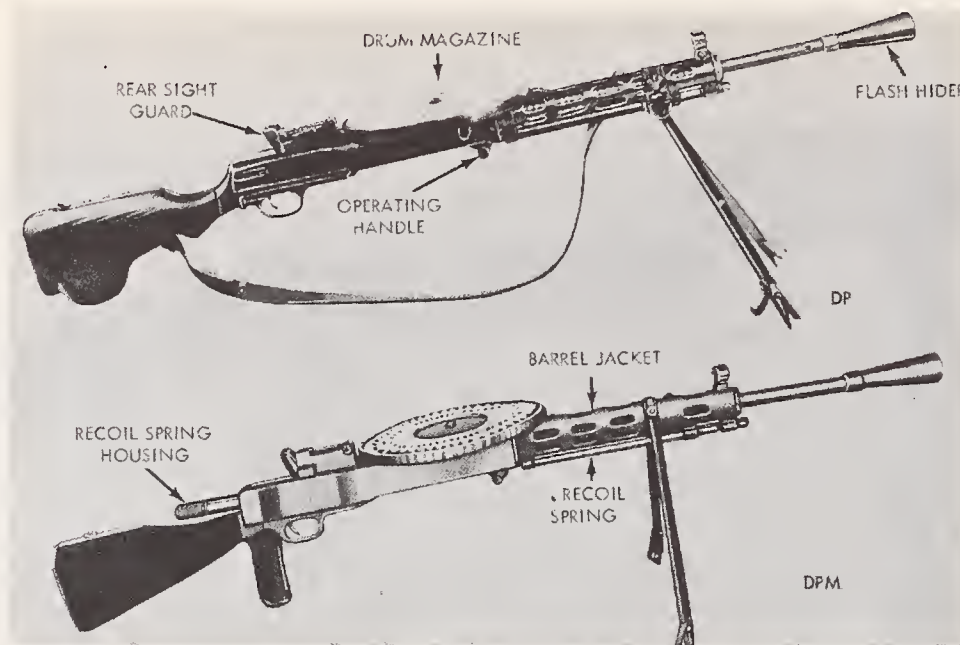




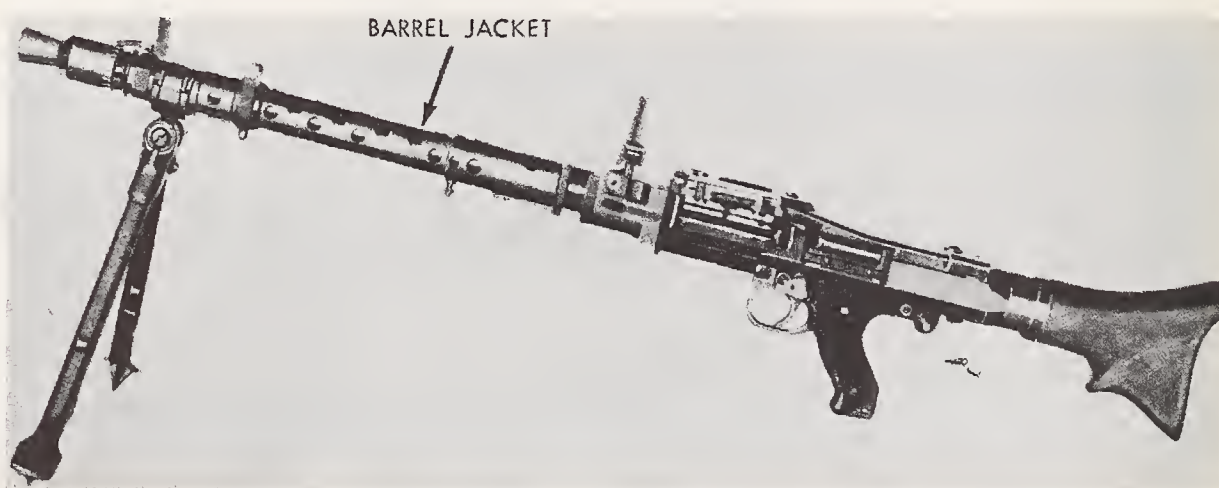
7.62 MM LIGHT MACHINEGUN (SOVIET RPD, CHICOM TYPE 56) AUTOMATIC, 7.62X39 AMMUNITION, 750 RDS/MIN (CYCLIC), 150 RDS/MIN (PRACTICAL) EFFECTIVE RANGE 875 YDS



7.62 MM COMPANY MACHINEGUN (SOVIET RP-46, CHICOM TYPE 58) AUTOMATIC, 7.62X54R AMMUNITION, 600 RDS/MIN (CYCLIC), 250 RDS/MIN (PRACTICAL) EFFECTIVE RANGE 1,100 YDS



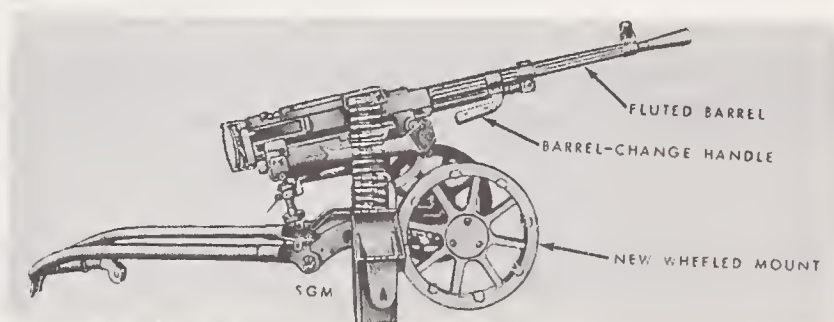
7.62 MM LIGHT MACHINEGUN (SOVIET DP AND DPM, CHICOM TYPE 53) AUTOMATIC, 7.62X54R AMMUNITION, 550 RDS/MIN (CYCLIC), 80 RDS/MIN (PRACTICAL) EFFECTIVE RANGE 875 RDS



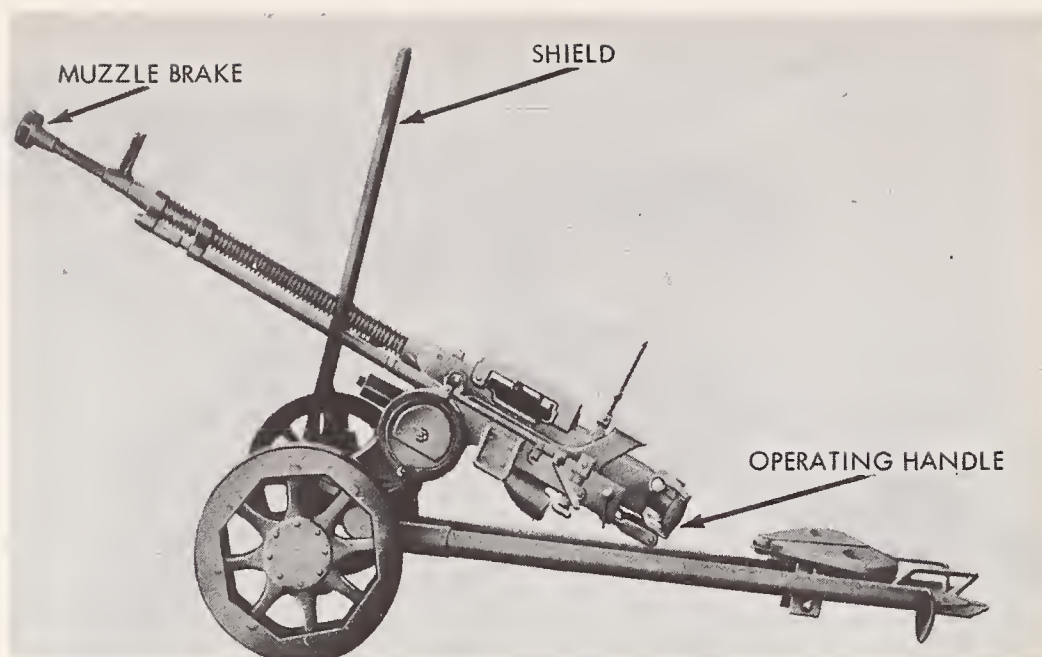
7.92 MM MACHINEGUN (GERMAN MG 34) SEMIAUTOMATIC, AUTOMATIC, 7.92 RIMLESS AMMUNITION, 900 RDS/MIN (CYCLIC), 100 - 120 RDS/MIN (PRACTICAL) EFFECTIVE RANGE 800 METERS



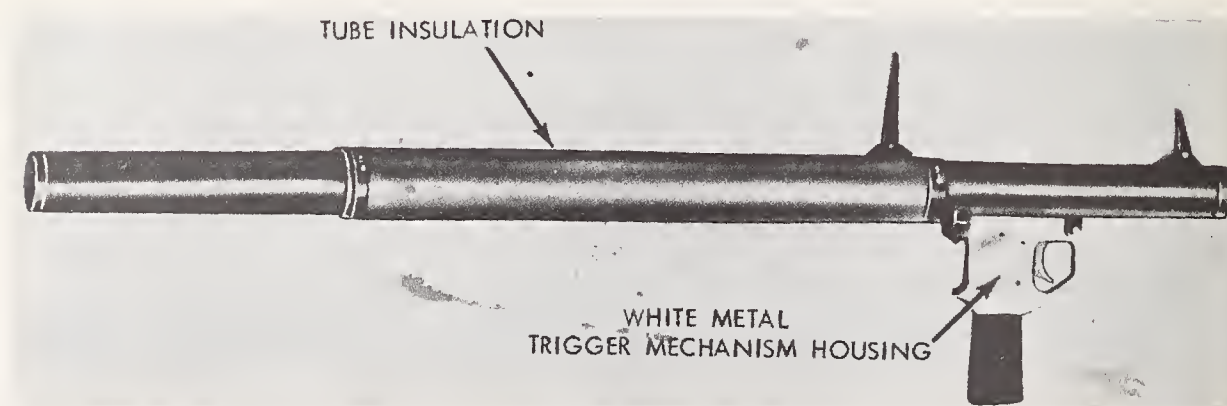
7.92 MM HEAVY MACHINEGUN (CHICOM MAXIM TYPE 24)
AUTOMATIC, 7.92 MAUSER AMMUNITION, 500 - 600 RDS/
MIN (CYCLIC), 250 - 300 RDS/MIN (PRACTICAL) EFFECTIVE
RANGE 1,000 METERS



7.62 MM HEAVY MACHINEGUN (SOVIET SG-43/SGM, CHICOM
TYPE 53/57), AUTOMATIC, SOVIET 7.62 LONG RIMMED
AMMUNITION, 700 RDS/MIN (CYCLIC), 250 RDS/MIN PRAC-
TICAL) EFFECTIVE RANGE 1,100 YARDS



12.7 MM HEAVY MACHINE GUN (SOVIET DShK 38/46, CHICOM TYPE 54), AUTOMATIC, ARMOR PIERCING - INCENDIARY 12.7X108 AMMUNITION, 600 RDS/MIN (CYCLIC), 80 RDS/MIN (PRACTICAL) EFFECTIVE RANGE GROUND 1,640 YARDS, AA 1,100 YARDS



40 MM ANTI-TANK GRENADE LAUNCHER (SOVIET RPG-2, CHICOM TYPE 56, VC B-40), 80 MM HEAT GRENADE, EFFECTIVE RANGE 110 YDS, ARMOR PENETRATION 7 IN



40 MM ANTI-TANK GRENADE LAUNCHER (SOVIET RPG-7),
80 MM HEAT GRENADE, EFFECTIVE RANGE 550 YDS,
ARMOR PENETRATION 9.4 IN

Use of Mines and Traps:

The enemy has made extensive use of traps and mines ranging from the primitive punji stick to recently introduced concave mines, similar to the Claymore. Generally, the purpose of a mine is to delay and harass. However, the electrically detonated concave mines have been used in an offensive role in conjunction with ambushes as anti-personnel devices.

Considering that the vast majority of the mines used by the Viet Cong and NVA are of the passive variety, that is, they are detonated by the victim, they must be emplaced at a location where there is a strong likelihood of U. S. and RVN troop movement. This increases the probability of encountering mines on roads, trails and other likely avenues of approach and the area surrounding the Viet Cong strongholds and NVA positions. There has also been a fairly high incidence of enemy mines being located close by U. S. and RVN installations, having been emplaced by infiltrators. The enemy more often than not plants two or more mines in each selected location. This often results in additional mines being detonated by personnel moving to assist personnel wounded as the result of an initial detonation.



VC CLAYMORE-TYPE MINES WITH GRENADE CASINGS IN BACKGROUND

Mines and traps should be respected. They are totally impersonal, and although they may take many forms and be well disguised, their effectiveness is only as great as the lack of respect accorded to them.

Mines and traps are aimed principally at the front line rifleman, at slowing down his movement and instilling fear. However, there is a direct relationship between the success of mines and the awareness of the individual rifleman. It must be assumed that a certain percentage of success will be achieved by the employment of mines and traps, however, this percentage need not be high. It can be whittled to the minimum by an awareness of the capabilities and limitations of mines, by an understanding of where they are most likely to be emplaced, and by a constant alertness on the part of the front line rifleman at whom they are aimed. STAY SPREAD OUT!

The Anti-Personnel Mine:

The most destructive device encountered has been the M16A1 anti-personnel mine.

Artillery shells are frequently used as both anti-personnel mines and anti-vehicular mines. In many cases, a grenade has been discovered rigged to the shell as a secondary device. Methods of finding this type of mine have been effective due to well coordinated efforts. Ordinarily, these mines are encountered along roads. By careful surveillance and patrol of the roads by the infantry, by careful mine sweeping efforts by the engineers, and by following up the engineer teams with tracked vehicles to discover and explode any remaining mines, the roads can be kept fairly clear.

Until the enemy obtained a supply of M16A1 mines, his favorite anti-personnel mine seemed to be an M-26 or a CHICOM grenade. These have been emplaced in the ground and above the ground in a variety of ways. The majority have been rigged with some type of trip wire. Grappling hooks with a long length of line and a long pole thrown ahead of a man have proved effective against trip wires.

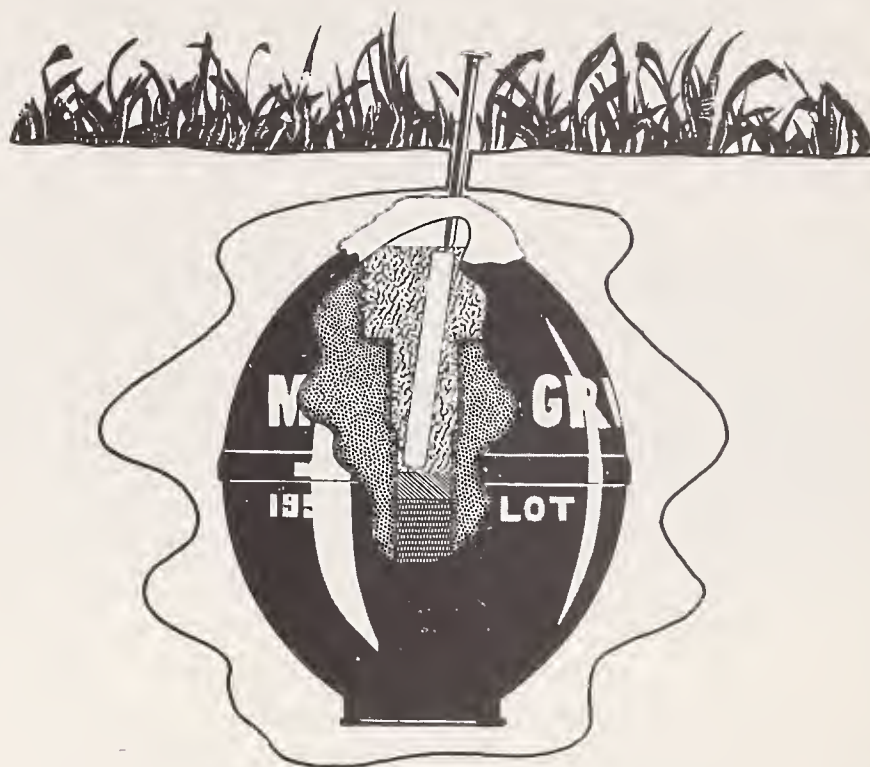
Neither of these methods has effectively countered the M16A1 mine; it is too powerful to permit anyone being that close. Nor is the grappling hook or the bamboo pole effective against pressure devices unless it just happens to directly hit the release device; tracked vehicles have been more successful. Homemade devices have ranged in size and description from a small clay pot which was used for fish sauce (nuoc mam), packed with explosives, to a light wooden box packed with about 40 pounds of explosive and heavily laden with scrap metal. This was then suspended six feet above ground in a tree line; the resulting explosion was devastating. Even artillery rounds wrapped with a layer of junk metal have been discovered hung in tree lines and over trails which were closely bordered by heavy brush.

Recently some bounding type mines have been discovered. This throws a 60mm mortar projectile about 8 feet into the air before the shell explodes. One Marine patrol activated three of these arranged atop a four foot paddy dike in a triangular pattern two yards on a side.

A suitcase containing explosives was picked up in an area which had been searched three days before. When a careless patrol member opened it, it exploded, resulting in three casualties.

The Grenade Mine:

U. S. M-26 GRENADE (MODIFIED)



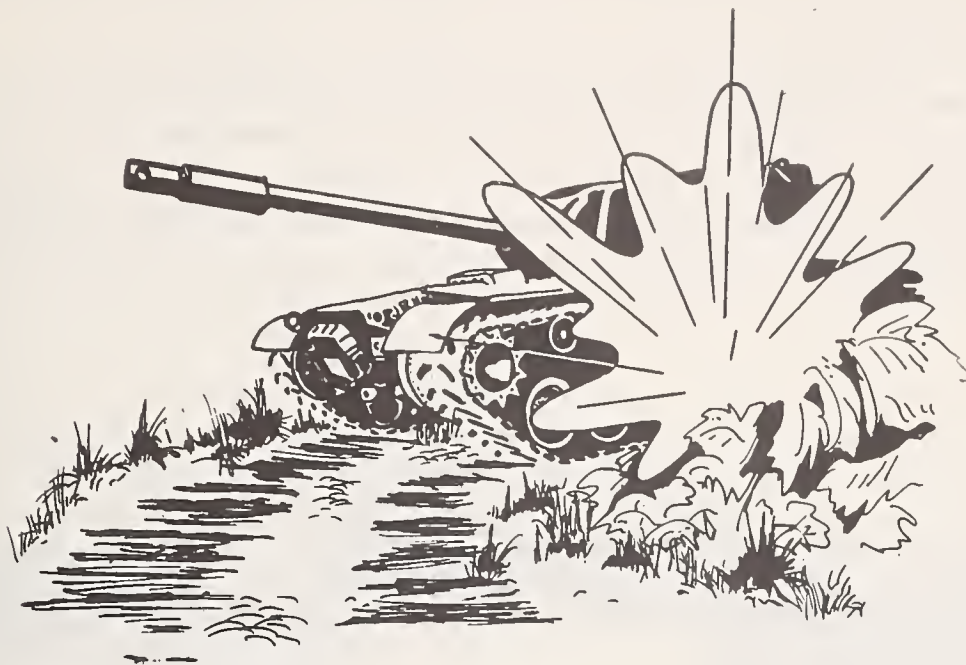
Captured U. S. M-26 fragmentation grenades become effective anti-personnel mines when modified by the enemy. The fuse assembly is removed and a non-electric blasting cap with a 6 penny nail placed in the top is inserted in the well of the grenade. Wax is poured into the grenade well, around the nail and blasting cap, to waterproof the grenade and hold the nail in place. This device is then buried upright with the nail protruding above the earth. The grenade is detonated when stepped upon.

In addition to probing and using mine detectors, a good visual inspection of the ground will reveal this device. If possible blow these devices in place because the fuse removal has made them extra sensitive.

The Command Detonated Mine:

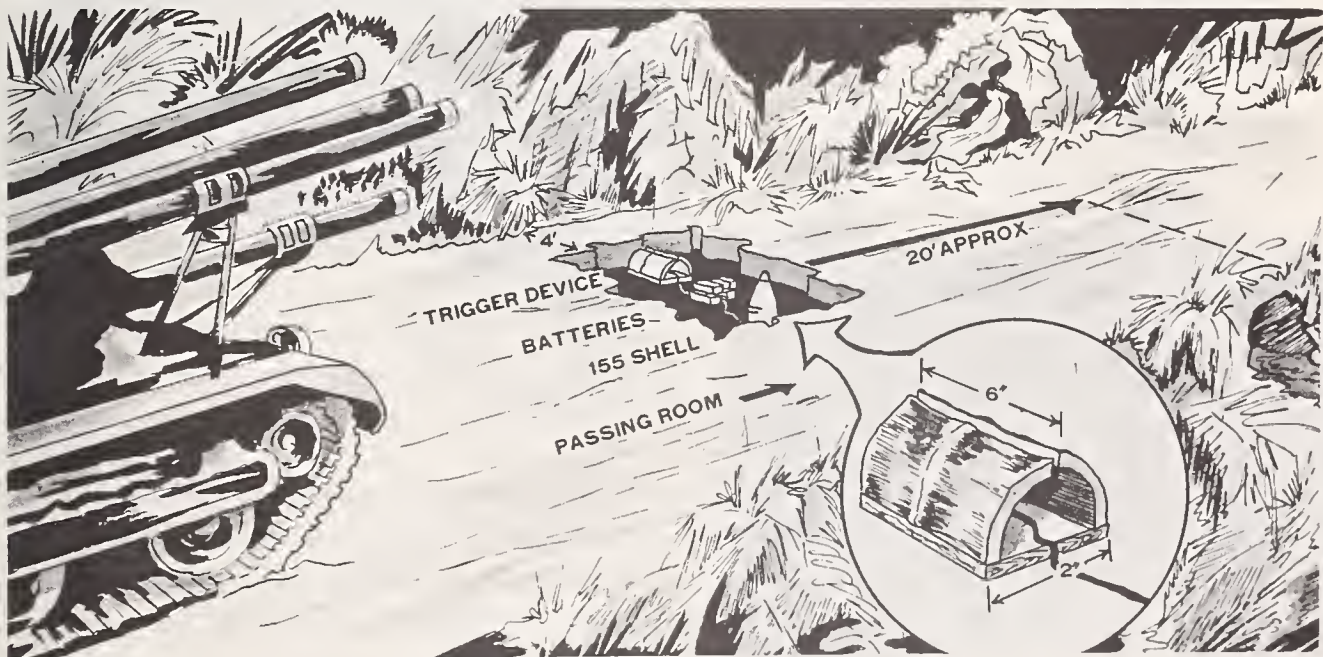
A great many of the enemy mines encountered are the controlled electric detonation type. Very often the lead wire used to detonate the mines is salvaged communication wire. It is extremely

difficult to distinguish mine lead wire from friendly communication lines.

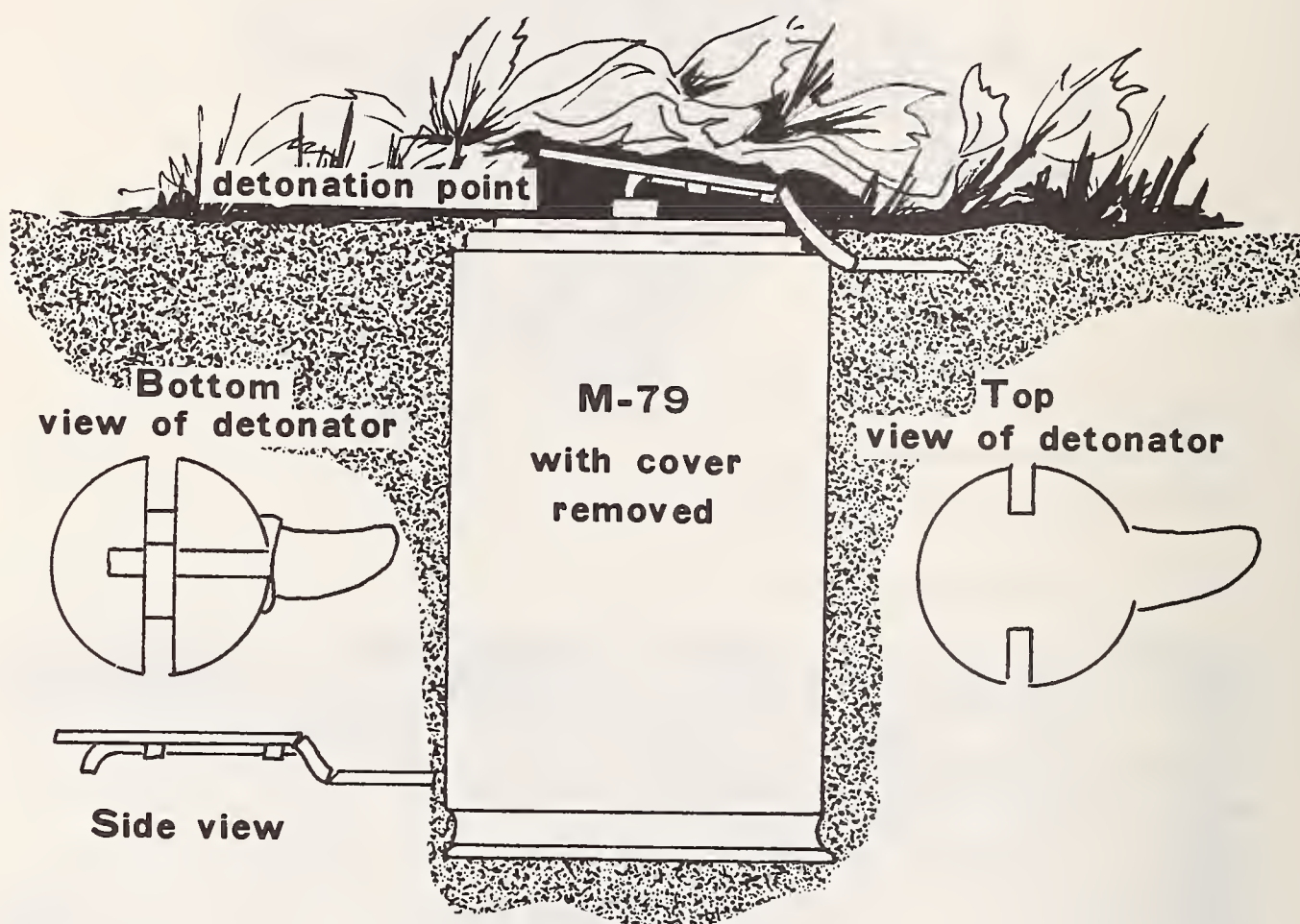


All communications wire should be moved at least 20 meters from travelled roadways. This practice will facilitate the visual detection of mines which the enemy planned to detonate electrically from positions off the road.

The Dud Munitions Mine:



Unexploded artillery shells have often been employed as mines by the VC. One interesting variant involved the emplacement of a 155mm round as a road mine with an improvised firing mechanism consisting of three pieces of bamboo, four flashlight batteries and a length of electrical wire. The entire firing mechanism and artillery round were buried just below the surface of the road at a depth where the weight of a man could easily have detonated it. The sketch illustrates the position of the mine. Note its distance from a culvert and that there is sufficient room on the right hand side of the road for a vehicle to bypass the mine if its location is known.



VC M-79 MINE

The enemy is adept at modifying all types of discarded or dud munitions for use as simple mine devices. A Marine patrol discovered a pressure type anti-personnel device which had been made from an M-79 round. The head of the M-79 cartridge was removed and the centrifugal arming device rotated until the round was armed.

A triggering device was the detonating contact. The device was then buried along a trail with the camouflaged trigger device above ground, where the pressure from the weight of a man would be sufficient to cause detonation.

This illustrates the importance of caring for and accounting for all ordnance or explosive devices.

A thirteen year old Vietnamese boy recently claimed that the VC forced him to reconnoiter helicopter landing zones and routes used by U. S. and ARVN forces. The boy was instructed by the VC to place hand grenades in helicopter landing zones which would detonate when the troops disembarked. This was to be accomplished by pulling the pin and wrapping a piece of string around the spoon to hold it in place temporarily. The free end of the string was then tied to a piece of heavy paper or cardboard, which in turn was laid over the grenade in the landing zone. Rotor wash from a landing helicopter was to blow the paper, thereby unwrapping the string, and releasing the safety lever.

Other Improvised Mines and Traps:



The ancient cross-bow has been brought to this strange war by the Viet Cong. Concealed along jungle paths, it is set off when a thin line across the path is disturbed.

The Malayan whip is used along trails and is released when a trip wire across the path is disturbed.





This grenade will be concealed completely and will be set off when the bamboo gate is opened or closed.

Steel spikes used by Viet Cong.



This device fires one round at its intended victim when he touches the trip wire and the mousetrap snaps shut on the primer of the bullet.

This device fires a bullet into the foot of its victim when he steps on it.



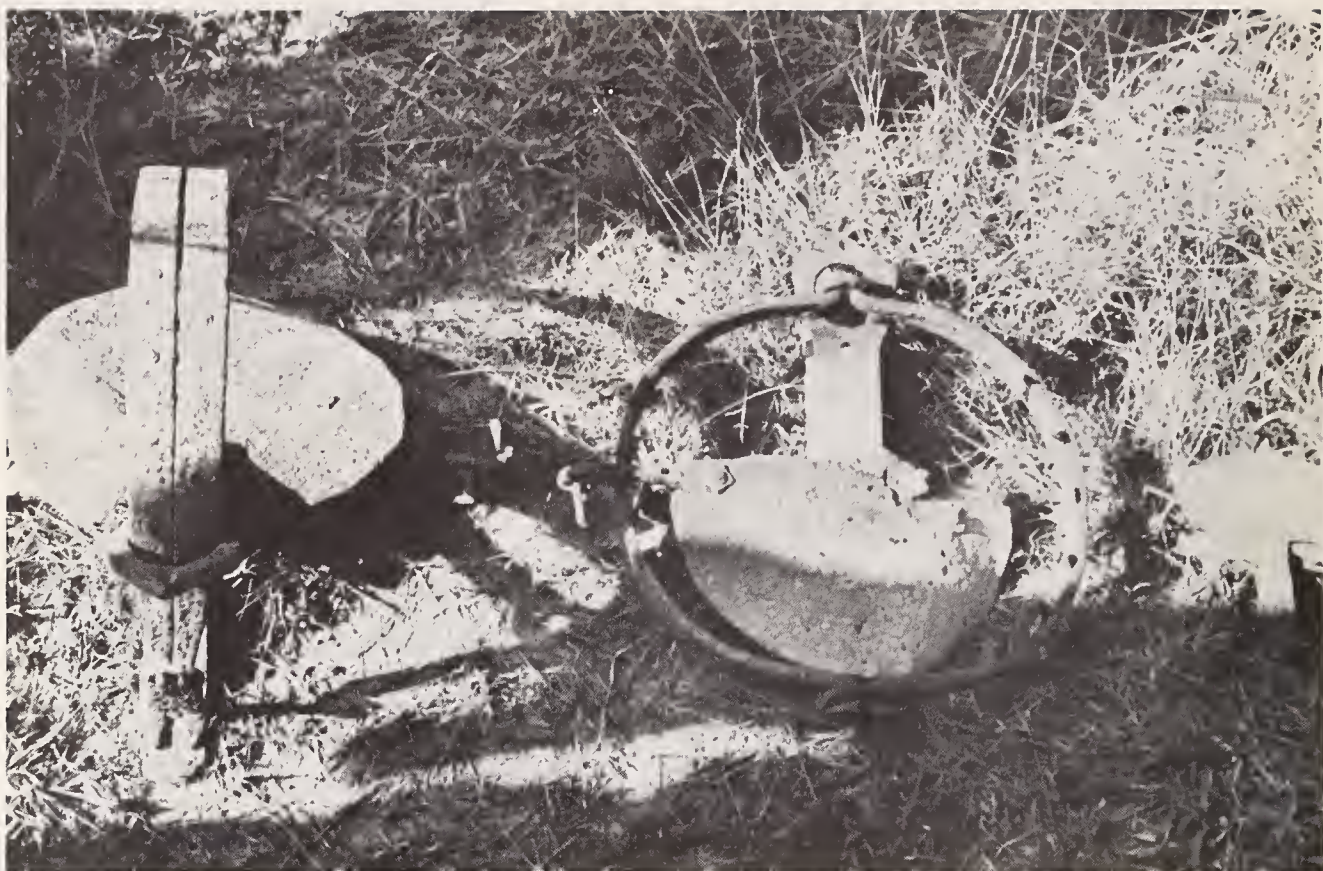


This trap is designed to pierce the ankle of its victim. It was devised after U. S. forces brought the anti-punji boot with its steel insole to Vietnam.

A discarded C-ration can may become a deadly mine when rigged as shown at right with explosive, detonator and trip wire.



A deadfall like the one pictured at left can be suspended inside a hut above the door. The trip wire is released when the door is opened and the deadly instrument comes swinging down chest high. The Viet Cong have made some of these as large as 500 lbs, studded with steel stakes.



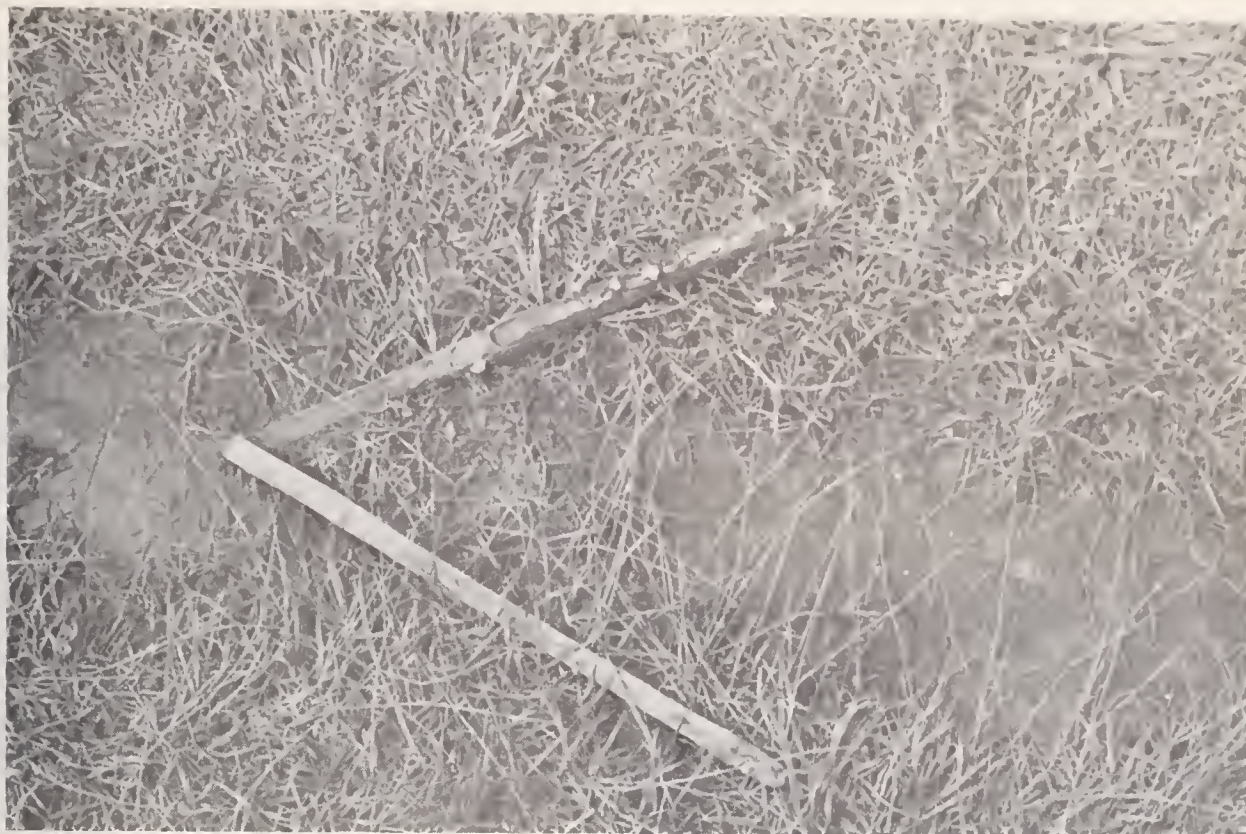
THE VIET CONG ALSO HAVE BEAR TRAPS IN THEIR ARSENAL OF MINES AND TRAPS.



A section of bamboo can also be turned into an effective mine.

This electrical firing device was made completely from discarded U. S. material. Crude but effective.





The above sign warned of VC mines ahead. Several types of signs are used by the VC to point out to their own people whether a particular area is safe or mined. Although these signs change periodically and differ from area to area, it will do a Marine well to watch for peculiarities such as an unnatural arrangement of sticks or stones when operating in VC controlled areas.



Workers setting
spikes in mud.

Completed spike segments.



Village graphics workers preparing warning signs.

Moving to a location to plant punji spikes and booby traps.





Preparing the area
for setting traps.

A worker digging in a punji pit is barely visible as seen in the lower right hand of picture.



VC Employment of Women:

Use of women as an enticement to enemy soldiers is not new to either guerrilla or conventional warfare. The Viet Cong have also employed women for espionage purposes, and to lead Marines into areas where they may be captured or killed.

Recently two Marines began looking for someone in their area to do their laundry. They checked two houses in the platoon area, but the inhabitants had no soap. The pair left the perimeter and about 40 meters away they found a hut where a woman said she would do their laundry for a few cans of "C" rations. One Marine went into the hut to give the woman the laundry, and the other Marine stayed outside. While the first Marine was inside the hut discussing the price of the laundry, he noticed that the Marine who had remained outside was talking to a young girl. He appeared to be laughing and telling the girl jokes. A few minutes later the price had been

decided on, and the Marine who had been inside the hut emerged. His buddy was nowhere in sight. He returned to the platoon area and searched for him, to no avail. He notified his squad leader and they both searched; his platoon commander dispatched two squads which searched until dark.

To this day, no trace has been found of this young Marine who was last seen joking with a young Vietnamese girl, only forty meters from his platoon's CP!

THE HAMLET AND THE VIET CONG



THIS PHOTOGRAPH IS TYPICAL OF A VIETNAMESE HAMLET IN THE LOWLAND REGION.

Vietnamese villages are generally made up of several small hamlets located in close proximity to one another. The hamlet will always be located along the access route such as a road, river or trail. The picture above fairly well depicts the typical hamlet and the surrounding rice fields. As the reader can see, hedges surround each hamlet and in many cases, more hedges separate houses and gardens within the hamlet. The presence of

the hedges severely limits the fields of observation, compounding the difficulties encountered in entering and searching a hamlet. If the hamlet happens to be occupied by Viet Cong and they are alerted prior to our arrival, mines and traps will be set along the likely approach routes, at fence openings, and in houses. This necessitates a slow, methodical entry with a covering force left behind. The troops must avoid being canalized into a single direction by fences, hedges, punji traps, etc. Friendly villagers can often provide information as to the location of mines, traps and Viet Cong locations. It is well worth cultivating friendship with local inhabitants.



THE VIETNAMESE FURNISH MARINES WITH VALUABLE INTELLIGENCE

The Viet Cong are masters in the art of tunneling and camouflage. In hamlets that they occupy, tunnels and bunkers will be dug in which they can hide while we are in the area. Many of these tunnels will be expertly constructed and camouflaged with entrances underwater, such as on the side of a stream, or underneath the cooking area in

the house, and are extremely difficult to locate. In one hamlet sweep, Marines located a hidden tunnel entrance. They didn't know if the tunnel was occupied or where it led, so they put a smoke pot and blower in the entrance, flushed out the guerrillas, and exposed other entrances. It is often necessary to occupy a hamlet for a period of time until the Viet Cong are forced from their hiding places by lack of provisions.



Note the dense vegetation separating each house and how it affects observation.

course, wounded by the fragments.) These peculiarities must be borne in mind, and the individual must remain ready to adjust his plans to the situation, for it varies considerably from hamlet to hamlet.

The search must be conducted with the utmost thoroughness. The searcher should honor others' belongings, but must not be inhibited in the thoroughness of his mission. When searching, especially look at the rafters, thatched roofs, rice bags, hay stacks, dung heaps and wells, as these make excellent hiding places for arms and equipment.

The searchers must understand the techniques of entry and search of hamlets, as they differ considerably from city search techniques. Observation is more restricted due to hedges; hamlets lack the patterns found in the organization of city streets; and grass and adobe structures do not provide much cover. (Example: One Marine threw a grenade into a room and stood next to the grass wall waiting for the detonation. He was, of



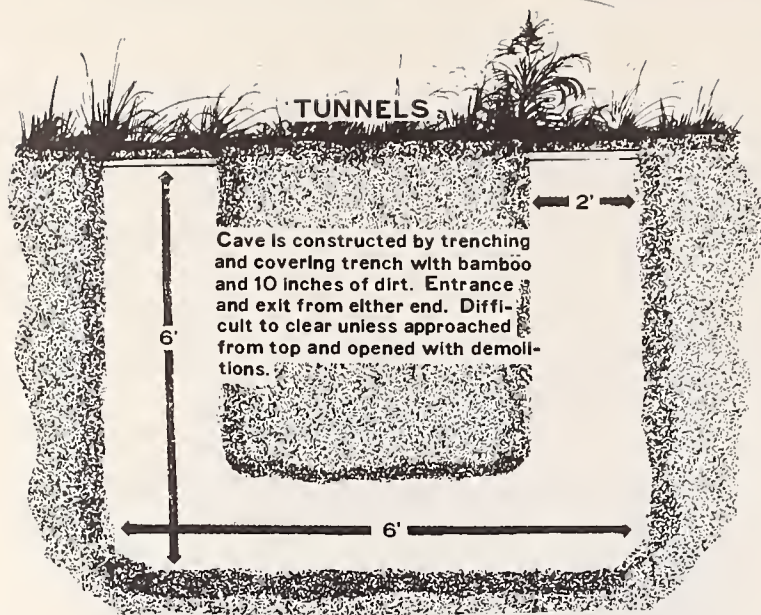
Arrangement of material in this house appeared suspicious.

A board found under the arrangement of bottles, baskets and jugs.



Several Viet Cong were discovered hiding in this hole.

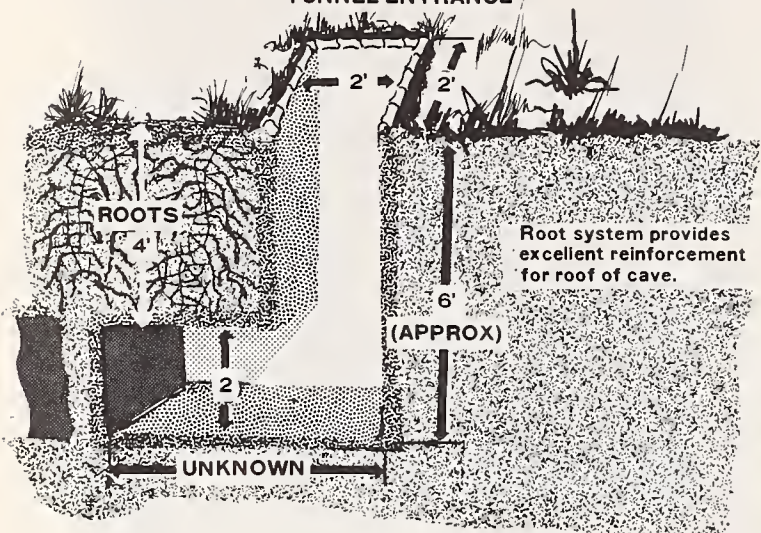
The Viet Cong have made a concerted effort to control as many of these hamlets as possible and to gain the support of the inhabitants. Only with this control and support can they survive as guerrillas. Our mission is well defined: To enter these areas, clear them of Viet Cong, and gain the trust and confidence of the people.



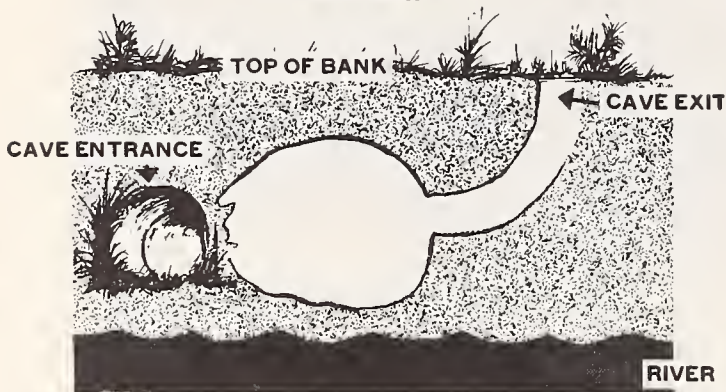
TUNNELS

Cave is constructed by trenching and covering trench with bamboo and 10 inches of dirt. Entrance and exit from either end. Difficult to clear unless approached from top and opened with demolitions.

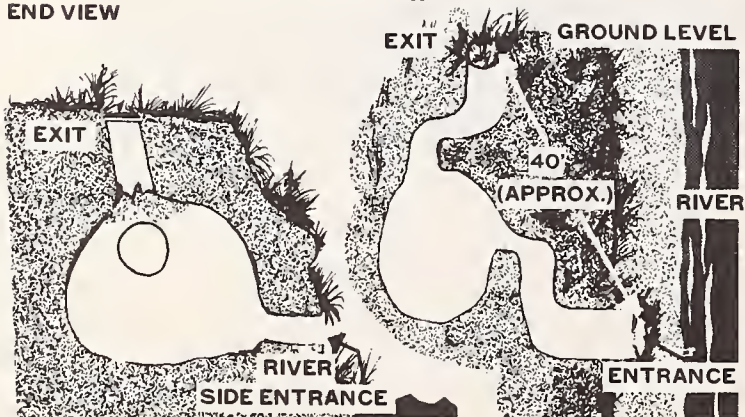
TUNNEL ENTRANCE



RIVER CAVE SIDE VIEW



TOP VIEW

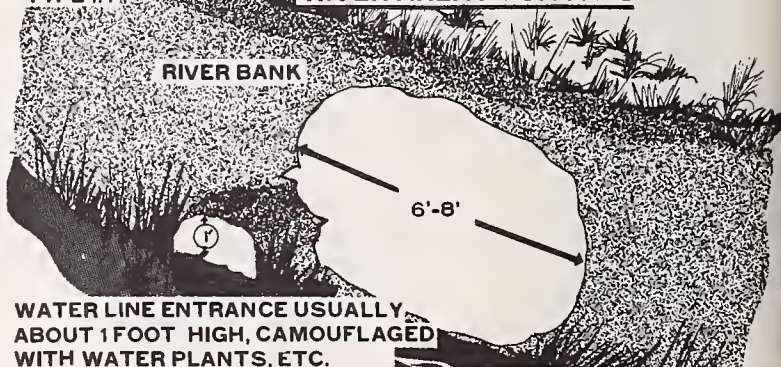


CONCEALED TUNNEL ENTRANCES



TYPE #1

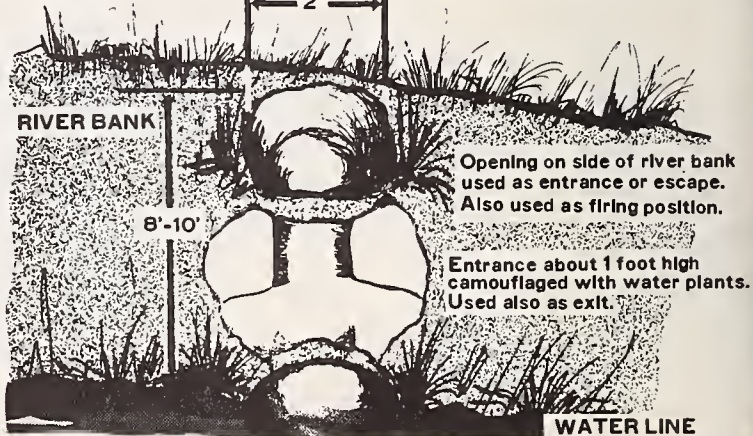
RIVER AREA POSITIONS



WATER LINE ENTRANCE USUALLY ABOUT 1 FOOT HIGH, CAMOUFLAGED WITH WATER PLANTS, ETC.

This type of cave usually has entrance from below water line to about 1 foot above. There is about a 2 foot approach leading to the main room which is circular and about 6 to 8 feet across. Can only be entered from the water.

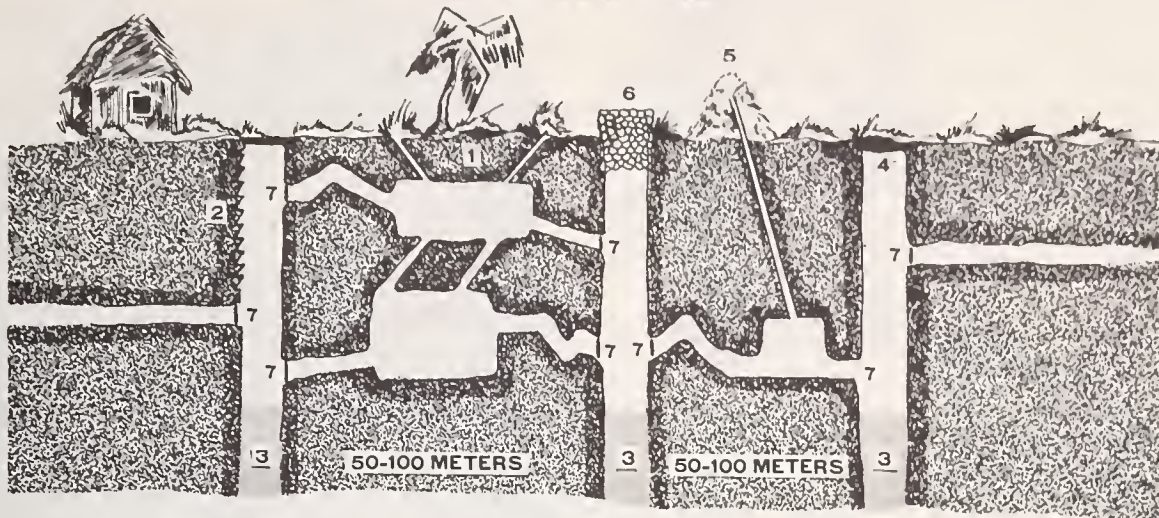
TYPE #2



Opening on side of river bank used as entrance or escape. Also used as firing position.

Entrance about 1 foot high camouflaged with water plants. Used also as exit.

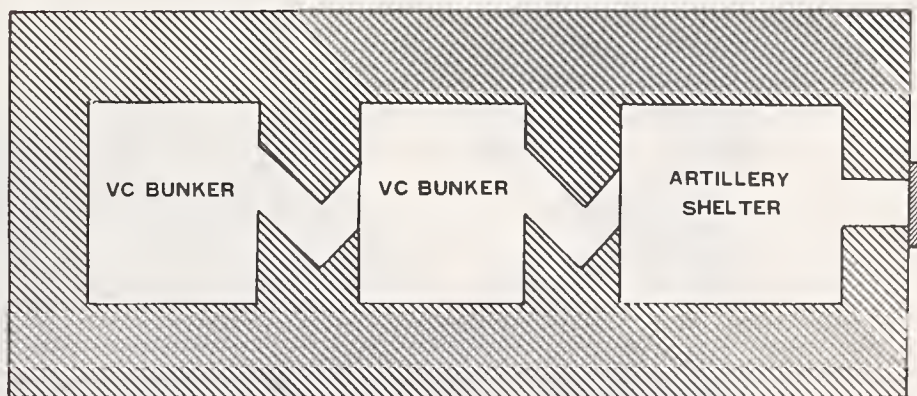
WELL-TUNNEL COMPLEX



- | | | |
|-----------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1. AIR VENTS | 4. CAMOUFLAGED COVER | 7. CAMOUFLAGED ENTRANCE COVERS |
| 2. NOTCHED DIRT STEPS | 5. CAMOUFLAGED VENT HOLE | |
| 3. WATER | 6. NORMAL WELL TOP | |

Well-Tunnel Complex above was discovered near Ben Cat in September 1965. It is a series of multi-bunker tunnels with angled connecting tunnels. Each bunker has space available for 15 to 20 men. The entrance to and exits from the VC bunkers are built into the walls of actual or simulated wells which are 20 to 30 meters deep. Access to these skillfully camouflaged entrances and exits is by way of notched dirt steps or by the use of notched bamboo pole ladders.

VC UNDERGROUND BUNKER



VC ENTRANCE SKILLFULLY CAMOUFLAGED

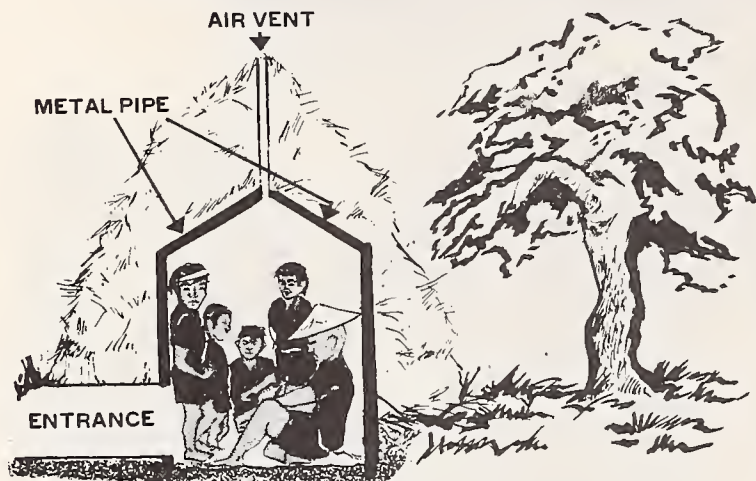
Bunker shown above was discovered in the vicinity of Da Nang during June/July 1965 by ARVN units.

It is a multi-bunker tunnel with angled connecting tunnels. Each bunker has space available for 3 or 4 men. The entrance to the VC bunker is built into the wall of the artillery shelter and skillfully camouflaged. A second bunker is concealed behind the first; each entrance in turn is camouflaged on the outside by local inhabitants.

HAYSTACK USED FOR HIDING PLACE/MEETING PLACE

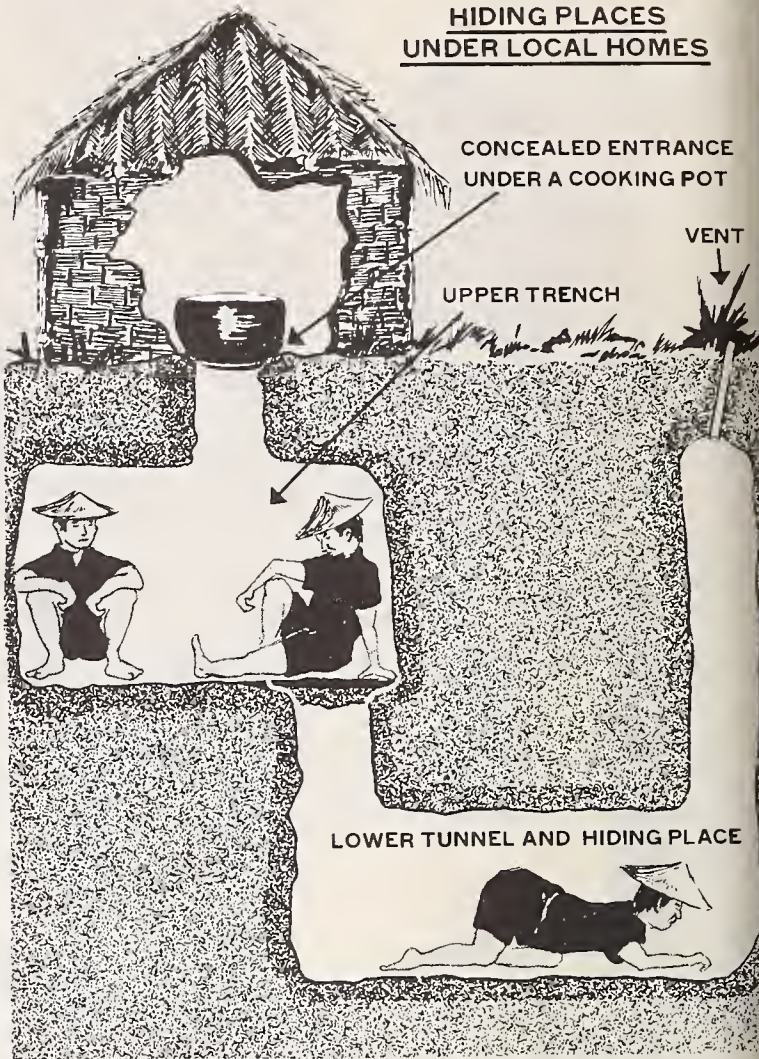


OUTSIDE APPEARANCE

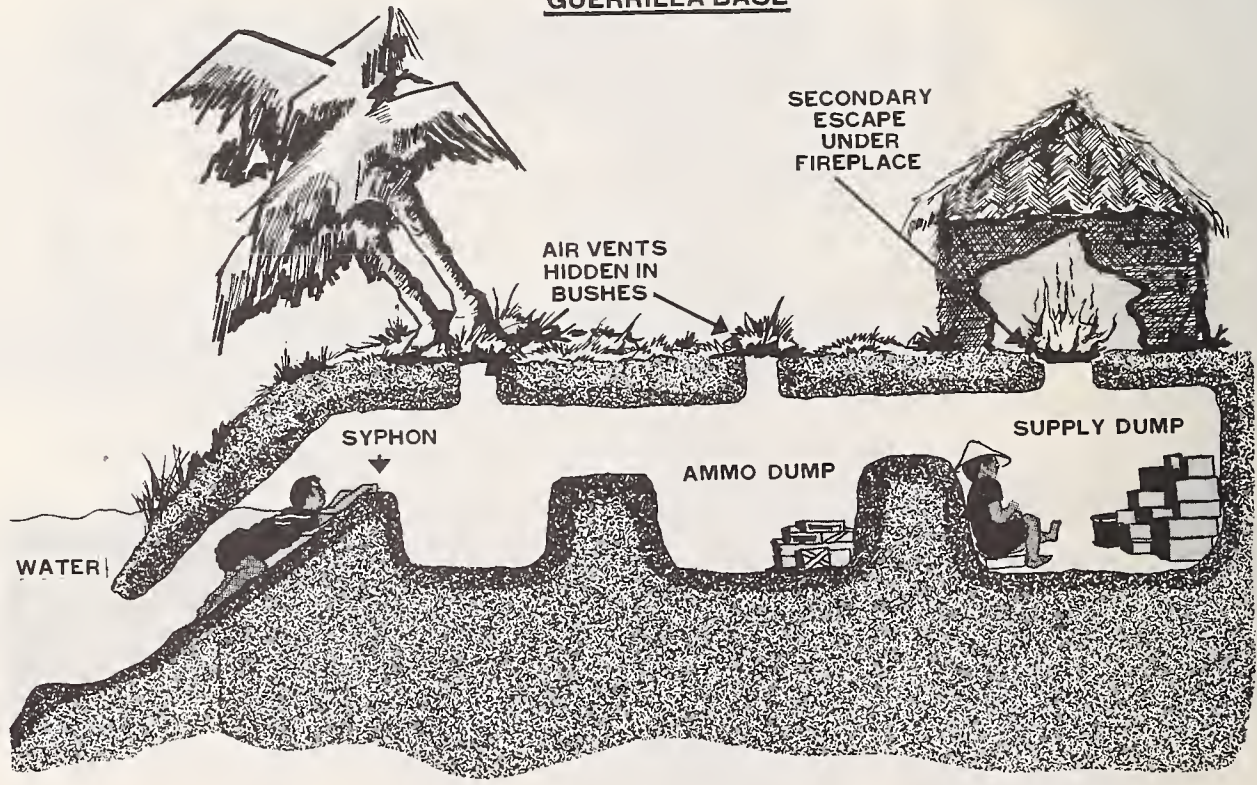


ROOM FOR 5 MEN

HIDING PLACES UNDER LOCAL HOMES



GUERRILLA BASE





An alert searcher has spotted a suspicious-looking area.

Careful investigation has flushed a Viet Cong from a cleverly concealed hiding place.



This simply constructed spider hole could have been easily overlooked by a careless searcher.

URBAN AREAS

The enemy will also be found in cities as well as in the hamlets and villages. He may occupy a city covertly, thus requiring friendly forces to drive him from the city, or he may attack a city occupied by friendly forces. In either case, the combat in this situation will be by the standard, methodical, house-by-house clearing operation typical of city fighting. Naturally an effort should be made to keep damage and destruction down to a minimum. A city that has been reduced to a pile of rubble is worth considerably less than one which can still provide shelter and give the former occupants a chance to return and begin the painful task of rebuilding their homes and their lives. National shrines and monuments and places of worship are especially important to the people. Government buildings will also be a necessity in assisting the people to recover from the aftermath rapidly. Unfortunately, the enemy will have little regard for the feelings of the people and will probably fight from within any structure that will afford cover and a tactical advantage. In this case, the Marine has no alternative; he must do whatever is necessary to achieve the military objective at a minimum of risk to himself and his fellow Marines. The only caution offered here is that the Marine should avoid senseless destruction of property. Deliberately and maliciously destroying buildings and structures without a reasonable military purpose will not contribute to a victory. It will, in fact, have the opposite effect in that the military advantage gained by clearing the city will be offset by the adverse reactions of the people, if they feel that the Marines were unnecessarily destructive.



MARINES IN HOUSE TO HOUSE FIGHTING

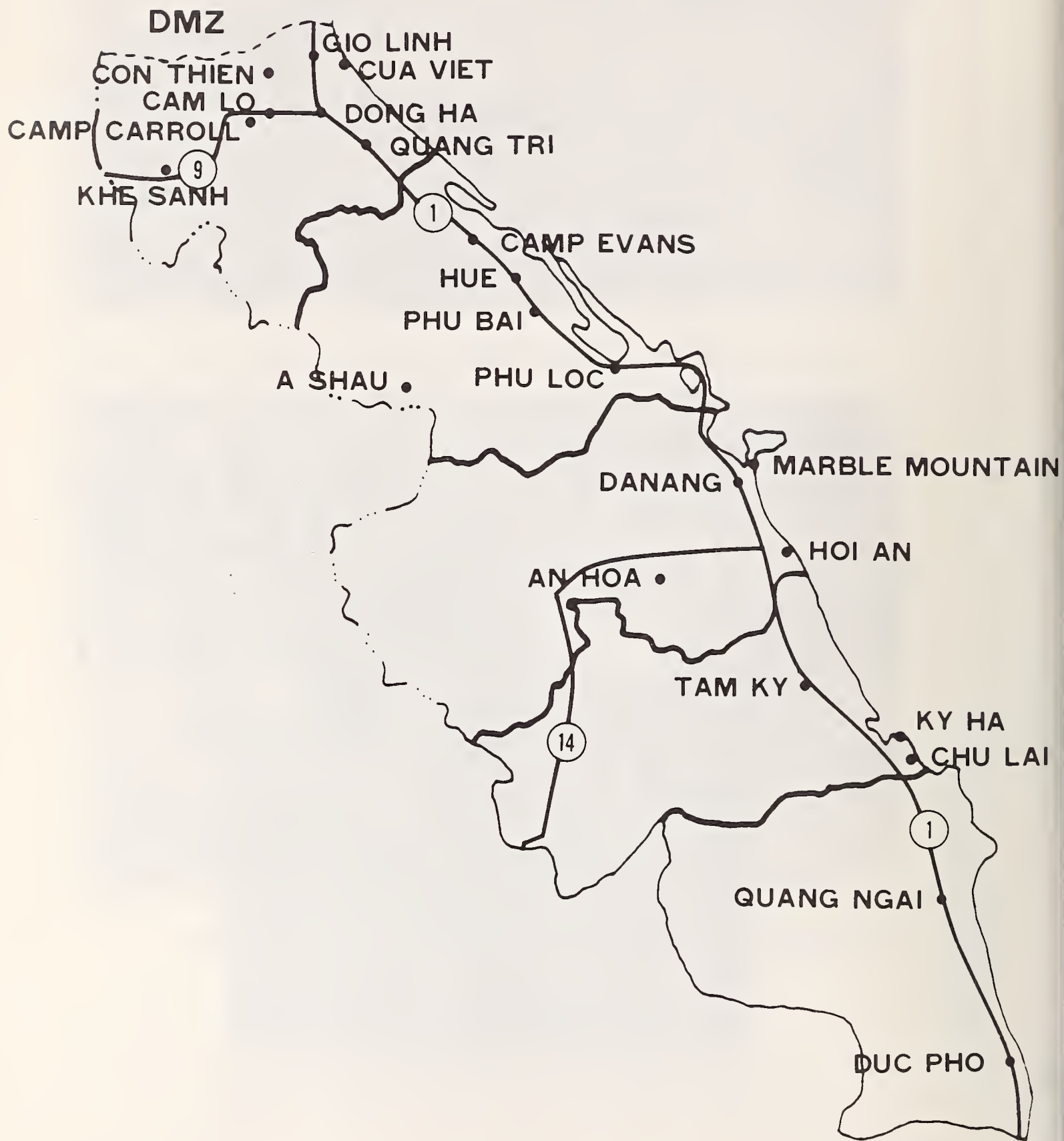


MARINES MOVING INTO A BUILT-UP AREA.



REFUGEES FLEEING HUE CITY DURING THE BATTLE

KEY LOCATIONS IN I CORPS



MARINE AREAS

The present Marine offensive effort is essentially based upon five locations in the I Corps area: Dong Ha, Quang Tri City, Hue - Phu Bai, Danang and Chu Lai. Each area has two things in common: an air field and rice paddies.

Dong Ha:

Marines moved into Dong Ha in July 1966 when the North Vietnamese moved across the Demilitarized Zone and Operation Hastings commenced. Dong Ha is located approximately twelve miles south of the Demilitarized Zone and nine miles from the coast.



VIEW OF DONG HA AIRFIELD LOOKING SOUTHEAST



DONG HA VILLAGE

Phu Bai:

Phu Bai is located approximately 10 miles south of the old imperial capital of Hue on Highway No. 1. The Marine base camp is located on the high ground overlooking the airstrip and is approximately 7 miles inland from the coast. The location of the camp affords excellent observation and fields of fire in all directions.



MARINE BASE AND AIRSTRIP AT PHU BAI



MARINE OUTPOST NEAR PHU BAI RECEIVES ITS SUPPLIES BY HELICOPTER

Danang:

The port city of Danang, the largest city in the I Corps area, is the home of the III Marine Amphibious Force. The Danang airfield, located a short distance west of the city, is one of the world's busiest and is the site from which thousands of flights are launched each month in support of U. S. and RVN operations. Marine ground units stretch out for miles to the north, west and south, providing protection against Viet Cong attacks.

The Danang military complex is the largest of all the Marine installations in I Corps. The complex starts at the foothills west of Danang and includes the Danang airfield, port facilities at the base of Monkey Mountain, and the airfield at Marble Mountain. All services, including the Marine Corps, the U. S. Navy, the U. S. Air Force, the U. S. Army and the Vietnamese Army are represented in the Danang area. It is the one area that each Marine is sure to visit because with very few exceptions, all incoming, outgoing and R&R personnel in I Corps are processed through facilities in the Danang area.



DOWNTOWN DANANG



DANANG MARKET PLACE



A6 AIRCRAFT TAKE OFF FROM DANANG ON A MISSION

During the latter part of 1967, an airfield was built by Marines and Sea Bees near Quang Tri City. This base is approximately ten miles southeast of Dong Ha. Its facilities house and support aviation and ground units which operate in the Northern I Corps.



AN F4 TAKES OFF TO PROVIDE MARINES WITH CLOSE AIR SUPPORT

Chu Lai:

The southern most area in I Corps where Marines are stationed is Chu Lai. Prior to the Marines' arrival, only small scattered villages existed in the area. Chu Lai has been transferred into a bustling complex, housing Marine aviators and U. S. Army units. The immediate area around the airfield is typified by broad sandy expanses that stretch up to five miles inland from the beach. The areas adjacent to the beach differ considerably.



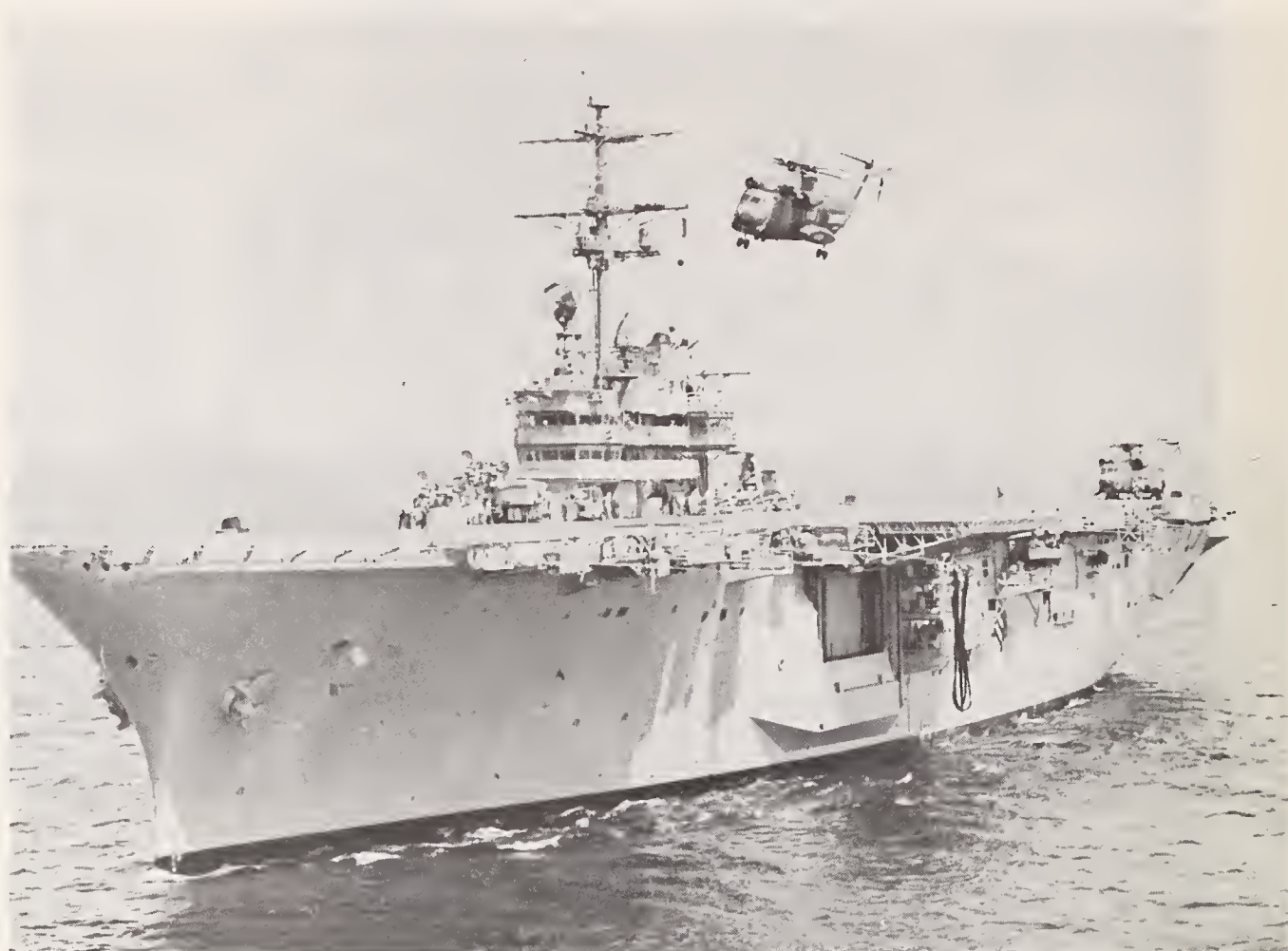
THE KY HA PENINSULA NORTHWEST OF THE BEACH AT CHU LAI



MARINES VISIT A SMALL HAMLET NEAR CHU LAI

In addition to the principal bases such as Chu Lai, Danang, Phu Bai, Quang Tri, and Dong Ha, there are many smaller Marine compounds throughout I Corps. Combat bases like Cua Viet, Gio Linh, Con Thien, Camp Carroll, and Khe Sanh are located adjacent to the DMZ and were established to prevent the North Vietnamese from crossing the DMZ into South Vietnam. A Marine might also serve at one of the many other typical bases such as Marble Mountain, Camp Evans, Hill 55, and An Hoa.

At some time during your tour in Vietnam you may be assigned to a battalion or helicopter squadron which is part of the Special Landing Force (SLF). As a member of this force you will have the opportunity to participate in amphibious landings, a traditional role of Marines. Marines assigned to this special landing force have conducted many landings in I Corps as well as in the other Corps of South Vietnam. All elements of an amphibious force from carrier based aircraft to naval gunfire may be employed during these landings. Many Marines now operate from LPH's (Landing Platform Helicopter) such as the one shown on the following page.



AN LPH (LANDING PLATFORM HELICOPTER) OF THE SPECIAL LANDING FORCE

Whether you are based afloat or ashore you will find that most of your needs have been anticipated and provisions have been made to care for them. Each major installation has adequate medical, administrative, billeting, food service and religious facilities. Post Exchanges are also available to provide health and comfort items. Wherever you hang your helmet, you will find that the Marine Corps support services are prepared to take care of "our own".

SECURITY AND PRESS RELATIONS

Since a great deal of the combat action takes place in I Corps, you will most likely have an opportunity to meet and talk with a variety of visitors including newsmen, U. S. and foreign dignitaries, and entertainers. Each Marine must understand that in addition to normal security considerations, policy and national interests are invariably involved with events in Vietnam. Talking with visitors is encouraged; however, good judgment and common sense should be used. If you are asked for your opinion on a particular matter, be sincere and truthful in your answer. Stick to the facts. Avoid rumor and exaggeration, and don't let your personal likes and dislikes influence the objectivity of your answers. Remember that anything you say concerning certain sensitive subjects may, at the least, cause embarrassment and misunderstanding, or worse, may endanger your life or the lives of your friends by jeopardizing our security. THESE RESTRICTED SUBJECTS WILL BE EXPLAINED BY YOUR COMMANDING OFFICER IN VIETNAM. If you are asked questions which involve classified information, explain why they cannot be answered. You will probably find that deciding what to say about operations is your biggest difficulty. Nothing that could help the enemy should be discussed. For example, the number of troops involved, the plan of attack, or the location of landing zones. If you are in doubt as to what should be discussed, consult your commanding officer or refer the visitor to the Information Services Officer. It isn't easy to weigh every word before it is spoken, but with one comment useful to the enemy, you may do more damage to the Marine Corps than all your years of faithful service can make up.

The following are some of the specific "DON'TS" which are dictated by security requirements:

- Don't discuss known friendly or enemy locations
- Don't discuss unit movements
- Don't discuss future operations, plans or orders
- Don't discuss casualty information
- Don't discuss status of supplies or personnel

In addition to the above, when using communications equipment:

- Don't give friendly coordinates in the clear
- Don't use proper names

Don't discuss passwords

Don't discuss any classified information over communication means.

LIFE OF THE MARINE IN VIETNAM

A Marine assigned to duty with the III Marine Amphibious Force can expect to be located in or near one of the five bases described previously. The particular assignment will, of course, depend upon a Marine's MOS and the requirements of the unit to which he reports. Regardless of where he is assigned, as a Marine in a combat area, he will be called upon to put forth a great effort.

Many support and service support activities are given additional responsibilities such as providing personnel for base defense or for provisional rifle platoons. In this manner, many Marines will be afforded the opportunity to function in the traditional role of rifleman in a combat environment in addition to their regular duties.



MARINES OF A PROVISIONAL RIFLE PLATOON MOVE OUT ON PATROL.

On 8 March 1965, there were 500 Marines in Vietnam. One year later, there were over 50,000; today over 85,000. The original task of defending the Danang airfield is but one small part of the present day mission. Today, the nature of Marine operations is essentially offensive. At the time of the Marines' arrival, Viet Cong main force units roamed the countryside and struck government outposts almost at will. However, the greatest threat came from the Viet Cong guerrillas who, over the ten preceding years, had penetrated deeply into the daily life of the people through their network of terrorism, brutality, threat and extortion. Governmental influence was rare beyond the outskirts of the cities and usually consisted of nothing more than a passing military unit which was of little benefit to the people. Law and order had deteriorated, and the thousands of people who craved protection found no one to whom they could turn. The result was a frightened and disorganized population slipping gradually under Communist domination.

It was clear from the beginning that in this region, the battlefield lay among the people. It was concluded that the best way to fulfill the task of airfield security was by continuous offensive action, ranging at long distances from the airfields themselves, designed to weed out the Viet Cong guerrilla infestation from the population and, at the same time, seeking out any enemy main force units that could be locked in combat. And, through it all, to establish a relationship with the people which would cause them to voluntarily support the U. S. and the Vietnamese and correspondingly, to withhold support from the Viet Cong.

This job is being done by three types of offensive action; large unit operations, counter guerrilla operations, and revolutionary development. The large unit operations are conducted against the main force units and generally consist of a multi-battalion force. These operations are familiar to most of us, as they usually receive wide recognition in the newspapers. Less spectacular and little publicized are the day-to-day patrols and ambushes conducted by the fire teams, squads and platoons. These are what eventually rout out the guerrilla and deny him access to the populace, the mainstay of his existence. In earlier days, it was said that the day belonged to the ARVN (or the French) and the night belonged to the enemy. This is no longer the case as the Marines conduct about half of their operations during the night and are achieving considerable success.

To the individual Marine serving with the III Marine Amphibious Force, the large unit operations and anti-guerrilla operations form much of his job, but these would be much less effective if it were not for the other type of offensive action: pacification and civic action. This means putting the people back on their feet and showing them that we are truly their friends. It has many facets; providing protection against Communist attacks, giving medical assistance, helping re-establish the local government, providing food and other forms of assistance. The objective is to bring the people to a state of self-sufficiency and to re-establish the local authority, since in the final analysis it must be the people themselves who finally defeat the enemy.

The Marines have met with success in Vietnam. Heavy blows have been dealt the enemy through operations both large and small. Large unit operations aimed primarily at infiltrated North Vietnamese units are normally conducted by battalion or larger sized units to seek out the enemy and destroy them.

Concentrated against the Local Force Viet Cong, over 10,000 small unit patrols and ambushes are conducted monthly by Marines alone and the guerrilla can no longer move freely about. The Civic Action Program is reaping positive results; "County Fair" operations destroy the Communist governing organizations within the villages and hamlets, and "Golden Fleece" operations protect the farmers' rice harvest. Although much progress has been made, there is still much to be done. Each Marine assigned to duty in Vietnam must approach his new job with a sense of responsibility, and the knowledge that the hopes of the South Vietnamese people and the remainder of the free world rest with him.

The training that has been provided to each Marine has prepared him for the tactical part of his mission in Vietnam. Your heritage and background as an American citizen will stand you in good stead in fulfilling the part of your mission that requires you to work in cooperation with the Vietnamese people. It will certainly be easier for you to carry out your mission in South Vietnam if you always bear in mind the fact that you are there to help the Vietnamese gain the same freedom and liberty that Americans enjoy.



The tank-infantry teams move out during a large unit operation.

Searching a Vietnamese boat - one of the many tasks of small unit operations.



Marines work with Vietnamese in nation building.



School supplies donated by Americans and distributed by Marines will help these children to help their country.

A Corpsman aids an injured Vietnamese woman.



Medical treatment is part of civic action.

MEDICAL TIPS

Malaria Protection:



ANOPHELES MOSQUITO (MALARIA BEARING)

Malaria is ever present in Southeast Asia and should be considered as a direct, personal threat to the health of every Marine entering Vietnam, whether it be for a full tour or for a few days. Malaria is transmitted by the bite of an infected mosquito. Spraying is partially successful in killing mosquitos in and around permanent base camp areas, but this is not always practical. Constant intelligent use of personal protective measures is the first step in malaria discipline. You should:

Use mosquito nets.

Use chemical repellents. The issue repellent is effective if used properly.

Avoid swimming or bathing after dark, since this is the time mosquitos are most active.

Avoid areas of high malaria incidence whenever possible. Villages in or near swampy and sluggish water areas are breeding places for the mosquitos.

Take your malaria suppression pills as prescribed. Malaria can be successfully treated, but as anyone who has had it can tell you, an ounce of prevention (a pill) is worth pounds of cure. Be alert for malaria symptoms, as these may vary greatly. Headache and fever are the most common symptoms. Report to your corpsman if you have any idea you are experiencing these ailments.

Leeches:

Land leeches are encountered in the swampy areas of Vietnam. It is disturbing to discover a slimy passenger fixed securely to an arm or leg.

The land leech, like a mosquito, is a blood sucker and is found in grass and foliage from which it attaches itself to passing humans. The leech fastens itself to the skin, feeds, and then drops off. The leech bite is painless and not at all harmful, although the small wound it makes may become infected. Leeches can be repelled by applying standard insect repellent to exposed skin. A leech attached to the skin may sometimes be dislodged by pulling it off by hand. Otherwise, it may be induced to detach itself by touching it with a lighted cigarette or by applying salt, vinegar, gasoline, or other strong solutions. The bite mark should be cleansed, preferably with alcohol, to prevent infection. If an infection does develop, see a corpsman for application of an antibiotic to kill the infection.

In short, leeches are nothing more than nuisances. With simple precautions, their effects can be minimized.

Immersion Foot:

Extended operations in the flooded areas along waterways and rivers may result in a prolonged wearing of wet foot gear. Unless wet socks can be exchanged frequently for dry ones and feet are periodically exposed to sunlight, immersion foot can result. This

is an extremely painful condition in which the feet swell and take on a puffy, wrinkled look. Extra socks and planned breaks to expose the feet can avoid the worst effects of immersion foot.



EARLY STAGE OF
IMMERSION FOOT



ADVANCED STAGE OF
IMMERSION FOOT

Other Insects:

As elsewhere throughout the world, there are many insects that will bite or sting human beings. These bites or stings which would normally be little more than a nuisance under civilized conditions, take on added significance in a combat environment. The predominantly primitive sanitary conditions that exist in Vietnam are aggravated by wartime litter and the expediency required during the combat situation. Even if the fly, louse (crab), flea, tick, spider or scorpion which bites or stings the Marine does not transmit a disease and causes little more than temporary discomfort, a break in the skin will result. This may swell, itch, and become infected. Field sanitation, therefore takes on added importance.

The first rule of course, is avoidance. Use insect repellents, mosquito nets and protective clothing, and conditions permitting, keep your clothing and bedding clean.

Personal hygiene is also of primary importance because cleanliness will reduce the chances of bites and stings becoming infected.

Snakes:

Many varieties of poisonous land and sea snakes exist in Vietnam and in its coastal waters. Dangerous land snakes can be found in all

types of terrain, including the flat, open coastal plains, the rocky hilly areas, and the jungles. Although the sea snakes prefer the sheltered places near the shore, usually at the mouths of rivers, they can be found anywhere in coastal waters.

The safest thing to do is to regard all snakes as poisonous and to act accordingly. Any snake bite should be treated promptly. The victim should preferably be treated by a corpsman and evacuated as soon as possible.

These are some of the poisonous land snakes in Vietnam.



BAMBOO VIPER



RUSSELL'S VIPER



BANDED KRAIT



COBRA

These are some of the poisonous sea snakes found in coastal waters off Vietnam.



ANNULATED SEA SNAKE



NARROW-HEADED SEA
SNAKE

Additional Health Hazards:

Tropical heat and over-exertion may have harmful effects on Marines in Vietnam. The importance of taking salt tablets, as appropriate, cannot be over-emphasized.

Heat exhaustion is caused by heavy sweating and results in excessive loss of water and salt from the body. Symptoms are dizziness, faintness, and pale, moist skin. For treatment, lie down in the shade, loosen clothing and drink a salt water solution of two crushed salt tablets per canteen of water.

Heat cramps result from excessive sweating and a lack of salt in the body. Seizure with muscle cramps, especially of the intestines, abdominal wall, arms or legs, and weakness and vomiting are common symptoms. Take large amounts of salt water solution for relief.

Heat stroke is a very serious, often fatal condition. It is characterized by very high body temperatures and unconsciousness. In a hot climate, the absence of sweat with hot, dry skin should serve as a warning. The single most important treatment is to lower the body temperature as rapidly as possible. Remove clothing and use shade and water baths to reduce temperature.

Note that heat exhaustion, heat cramps and heat strokes are each associated with sweating. It is important to replace the body fluids lost through sweating, so in addition to taking salt tablets which assist your body in retaining fluids, always drink plenty of water.

Because of high temperatures and humidity, skin rashes may occur. Bathe and air-dry armpits and groin areas daily if possible. The importance of overall personal hygiene is again emphasized. Keeping the skin clean will keep body pores open and reduce the chances of developing a rash or other skin ailments.

Stay away from water buffaloes. These animals are extremely nervous and high-strung and are apt to attack any tormentor. An infuriated 1,000 pound water buffalo can certainly present a problem.

Never eat or drink products sold by vendors. Ground glass has been found in the vendor's wares on numerous occasions.

MISCELLANEOUS INFORMATION

Postage:

All letters, and sound recordings that take the form of personal correspondence, may be mailed free of postage by personnel serving with, or attached to, a unit in the combat zone. Such letters and sound recordings should not be endorsed AIR MAIL, as all "FREE" mail is airlifted to end destinations as space available mail under Public Law 89-725.

Air Mail/First Class:

From RVN to East Coast	3 days
From RVN to West Coast	2 days
From East Coast to RVN	4 days
From West Coast to RVN	3 days

Parcel Air Lift (PAL):

Parcel Air Lift is provided to any parcel not exceeding 30 pounds in weight and not measuring in excess of 60 inches in length and width combined, mailed at or addressed to an armed forces post office, outside the 48 contiguous states, prepaid at the domestic surface parcel post rates plus \$1.00 surcharge.

Space Available Mail (SAM):

Parcels weighing five pounds or less, with postage paid at the 4th class rate are airlifted from the port of embarkation to WestPac units on a space available basis. Average transit times for "SAM" mail is:

From West Coast to RVN	5 - 7 days
From East Coast to RVN	7 - 9 days

Change of Address:

It is recommended that all personnel send change of address cards to all concerned, including any magazine subscriptions, as soon as possible upon arrival in country. This will preclude unnecessary delays in receiving mail.

Time Zone: Vietnam is in the zone that has an actual time differential of 8 hours slower than (behind) San Francisco, or eleven hours slower than New York City. However, Vietnam is "across" the International Date Line from the United States. During most of the day this causes a date differential of plus one day in Vietnam from the date in the United States (i.e., when it is 18 August in the U. S. it is 19 August in Vietnam).

Special Pay: The following monthly pay scales are in effect for personnel serving in South Vietnam. These pay scales are in addition to normal pay and allowances.

<u>RANK</u>	<u>OVERSEAS PAY</u>	<u>HOSTILE FIRE PAY</u>
Pvt/Pfc	\$8.00	\$65.00
LCpl	9.00	65.00
Cpl	13.00	65.00
Sgt	16.00	65.00
SSgt	20.00	65.00
GySgt & Up	22.50	65.00
All WO's	None	65.00
All Officers	None	65.00

Separation Pay: All married personnel, corporal or above with over four years service, whose dependents are not residing in government quarters are entitled to \$30.00 separation pay monthly.

Currency: Military personnel serving in Vietnam are required to use Military Payment Certificates (MPC) in lieu of U. S. currency. Upon entering the country, all personnel are required to exchange U. S. currency for MPC. Upon leaving, all MPC will be re-converted to U. S. currency by a disbursing officer. All sales of MPC for Vietnamese currency (piasters) will be made by the disbursing officer, since it is an offense for Vietnamese to have MPC. The exchange rate for U. S. forces is presently 118 piasters per dollar.

R & R Program: Our R&R (Rest and Recreation) program is in effect for Marine personnel serving in Vietnam. Each Marine is allowed one out-of-country R&R trip during his tour, conditions permitting. Areas presently on the list for R&R are Taipei, Okinawa, Hong Kong, Manila, Tokyo, Singapore, Kuala Lumpur, Bangkok, Australia and Hawaii. World conditions may cause areas to be deleted or new areas added. Nevertheless an R&R trip

permits a pleasant change of pace and an opportunity to shop at some of the world's best prices.

Hints and Tips: The Marine going to Vietnam should:

1. Ensure that his field and summer uniforms are in good condition. Extra utilities, socks, and underwear are advised.
2. Bring a minimum of non-required items since in many cases they will have to be stored. Personal weapons are prohibited.
3. Bring a couple of small plastic bags for keeping personal articles and special items dry.
4. Check page 15 of his Service Record Book (Record of Emergency Data) to ensure that the information therein is correct and up to date.
5. Make out an allotment. This cannot be overemphasized. Although it is required for all married men, bachelors should take advantage of the opportunity of saving some money. It is advisable to make out an allotment for U. S. Savings Bonds, the 10% Savings Deposit Program, or to a private savings institution.
6. Return personal valuables to his family.
7. Have two pair of glasses, when glasses are needed. Sun glasses are highly recommended, as the summer sun is particularly bright and hard on the eyes.
8. Have dental work completed, if possible.
9. Make out a will.

While in Vietnam, the Marine should:

1. Pay particular attention to his weapon and equipment. In this hot, humid climate, metals rust and corrode extremely fast. One should clean and oil his rifle as well as bayonet, magazines, and any other metal equipment at least daily.
2. Inspect his ammunition daily to insure it has not corroded.

3. Be supply - conscious at all times. Most supplies have to be transported from the U. S. and the cost is considerable in time and money. Waste not; want not.

4. Never just throw something away. What may seem like a piece of useless gear can be used by the Viet Cong. For example, a very effective electrical mine was made out of a discarded wooden ammo box, what was thought to have been a smashed radio battery, and some communications wire. The explosive was supplied by the VC.

5. Be conduct - conscious. This is a political as well as a military war; Marines must be ambassadors as well as fighters. The Viet Cong are more than ready to exploit through propaganda any embarrassing incidents caused by a careless Marine.

6. Take particular care to protect the property of the local inhabitants; rice fields and gardens should not be trespassed upon unless it is an operational necessity.

7. Write home as often as possible. Your family is genuinely interested in your welfare and wants to hear from you. Much congressional mail has been generated by parents who had not heard from their sons and who contacted their congressman to inquire.

8. Be always faithful in the practice of his religion through private devotion, public worship, and daily conduct. Chaplains will be found conducting religious services under just about every conceivable circumstance.



MARINES ATTEND A RELIGIOUS SERVICE.



A MARINE RECEIVES COMMUNION

SUMMARY

As its name implies, this booklet serves the U. S. Marine as a guide to the Republic of Vietnam. It is not a tourist guide nor is it a purely military technical manual. Its aim has been to introduce the Marine to a new environment. It should reduce or eliminate many unknowns that might plague the newcomer to Vietnam and serve to refresh the memory of the Marine who is returning for an additional tour.

"Know the enemy and know yourself--a hundred battles, a hundred victories" is a familiar quote taken from the ancient Chinese military philosopher Sun Tzu. The information to which you have just been exposed should help you to know the enemy, yourself, and the South Vietnamese people a little better. This acquaintance in turn will make it easier for you to concentrate on the important job at hand.

To the individual Marine this means participating in the balanced approach mentioned earlier: large unit operations, small unit operations, and country-building. The U. S. Marine, the other Free World Forces personnel in Vietnam, and the Vietnamese people will, in a cooperative effort, eventually defeat the enemy and secure the freedom that is being sought. Then and only then will the Marine be satisfied to leave his Vietnamese counterpart so that each in his own way may enjoy a life free from tyranny and oppression.



WORKING TOGETHER





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